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WITH LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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SEMI-MONTHLY

Vol. VIII, No. 1

NOVEMBER 15, 1897

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# The Chap-Book

Vol. VIII, No. 1

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## NOTES

### POLITICAL

MR. HANNIS TAYLOR'S article in the *North American Review* and his subsequent interviews with newspaper reporters have excited consternation in Madrid, as well they might. Something may be said of the impropriety of these utterances coming from an ex-minister of the United States while the subject he discusses is still in suspense. Doubtless Mr. Taylor has violated "the cardinal article of professional honor," besides proving himself a very snug dissembler, since it is apparent that while he lived in Madrid and was a commensal of the ministers of the government, he professed a lively friendship for Spain and a generous faith in her ability to crush the insurrection. He has not improved his own reputation as a trustworthy national servant. But, on the part of the public, resentment of his abuse of confidence has given way to the feeling that he has spoken the really definite and authoritative word on Cuba. It has been apparent for two years that, no matter what professions of good intentions may come from Madrid, Spain will never abandon her traditional colonial policy. As Mr. Taylor says: "A mere change in the person who fills the premiership amounts to nothing unless it signifies a change of policy. . . . I am satisfied, after careful investigation, that the ruling classes of Spain, civil, clerical, and military, are resolved, regardless of party, to refuse to make such concessions to their rebellious colonists as would meet with their acceptance. I cannot doubt that any ministry that dares to undertake such a perilous enterprise will be at once discredited and driven from office." The "reforms" recently promulgated by Sagasta are shams and frauds, and even if they were honest they would not touch the chief causes of the revolt, which are economic rather than political. Mr. Taylor declares boldly for intervention by the United States, but those who have not fallen under the influence of Spanish hospitality will hardly agree with him when he predicts that a joint resolution, favored by the President, will bring the Spanish government to a right-about-face. If the "ruling classes" are able to prevent a grant of adequate reforms to Cuba, they will be able to stifle the protests of "the Spanish people themselves, worn out and exhausted by an unfruitful struggle." In any case, the problem has



grown suddenly more complex, and a peaceful solution will not be rendered easier by the gathering of the jingoes in Congress a month hence.

THE RESULTS OF THE RECENT ELECTIONS may go far toward determining the president's position. Mr. McKinley went into office with a firm purpose to "settle the Cuban question." With this intention he despatched by the hand of General Woodford a note which probably has no parallel in the record of diplomatic correspondence between "friendly nations." But no sooner had the contents of the note leaked out than Mr. McKinley perceived that management of an international dispute is a far more complicated transaction than any that fell to his lot as congressman or party leader. Spain simply dodged, and the blow fell harmless. Directly the consequences of his action began to appear in the stock quotations, he was entreated by the most important of his supporters to modify his policy. Mr. Gage, the secretary of the treasury, a determined opponent of the "jingo policy," argued that a war with Spain would carry the country to a silver basis in a month. The president was alarmed, and his close friends who have talked with him since the despatch of the Woodford note have perceived a remarkable change of manner in discussing Cuba.

In ordinary circumstances the president might be expected to resist an onslaught of the "jingoes" with all his might. But the recent elections have shown the need of "stirring up new issues" to keep intact the following of the administration. The overturning of the enormous majority in New York state and the melancholy reduction of the Republican vote in Ohio and Iowa prove that the money question and the tariff question have lost interest for the masses. A new diversion is needed, and especially needed to save Senator Hanna. The hopes of the Republican manager hang on a slender majority in the legislature. Disaffection with his rule is apparent. It is reported on good authority that agents of Senator Foraker and employes of Governor Bushnell were active for two weeks before the election, urging local Republican managers to "knife" the Hanna candidates for the legislature. The Cuban question will come up in Congress before the Ohio legislature meets, and Foraker, who is the wildest jingo of all that wild tribe, undoubtedly will do his utmost to put Hanna on record as "an enemy of Cuban liberty." The Republican manager, who is a business man first, and only by avocation a politician, is opposed to intervention. But needs must when the Devil (or Foraker) drives, and he may be forced to adopt an advanced position, dragging his party behind him, next month.

IT HAS BEEN ASSUMED that if General Tracy had withdrawn from the canvass in Greater New York in favor of Mr. Low, the president of Columbia would have been elected. This assumption is based upon the fact that the combined vote for Low and Tracy was 20,000 greater than that cast for Van Wyck. This is an insecure foundation, for we must reflect that if Tracy had withdrawn, a large—a very large—portion of his vote would have gone to Van Wyck. Nothing could have been more clear than the fact that Mr. Platt's second choice was Van Wyck, and that his instructions to the initiated lieutenants of his numerous following were to beat Low at any cost. Since the election the *New York Sun* has declared on authority that a great many republican votes went to Van Wyck, and these were but a small fraction of what would have gone in the same direction if it had appeared that Mr. Low was "dangerous." The result was disappointing only to those whose fervor had led them to believe that the semi-savage masses in the dark back streets of New York are approachable from the side of intelligence or good morals. As we said once before, Mr. Low was defeated not because he was unfit to be mayor, but because New York is unfit to have him for mayor.

#### LITERARY

NO FOREIGN WRITER who visits America can complain that his reception lacks enthusiasm. That is the one quality that distinguishes our hospitality to the point of gush. Tact and taste are not always so apparent in the rush we habitually make for a newly-arrived author. Mr. Barrie, for instance, spent what were easily the three most uncomfortable hours of his life at the famous Aldine Club dinner. Bored, frightened, and abashed, the poor fellow tried again and again to efface himself in a quiet corner, only to be pulled out to submit to the presentation of some exuberant Scot who had hardly got well started on the subject of Scotland before he was supplanted by an American who did business with a Glasgow firm. Mr. Barrie did his best to appear cheerful and conceal his discomfort; though the expression on his face would not have yielded at any time a more flattering translation than "It's very kind of you, but —," with a suppressed glance at the door. We find it difficult, practically impossible, to square our welcome to the disposition of our literary guests. Our class of writers is not large enough or sufficiently concentrated in any one town to recall to a stranger the atmosphere of London or Paris. We turn on the tap of hospitality and there flows forth a condescending stream of business men, politicians, railroad presidents, lawyers, bankers, and so on, flecked here and there by authors and publishers, subsiding ultimately into a pool of Depewism to the instant submergence of literature. Not that Depewism, as a social factor, is without its attrac-

tions; on the contrary it would make a capital supplement to any comic paper. But to one who has drunk of the waters of the Garrick Club and the Travellers and the Savage and the Vagabonds, the fountain of Depewism, for a fixed literary liquid, is as Californian claret to Château Lafitte. There is too much iron in it, too harsh a flavor. Yet see its magical influence on New York's literary digestion! Lawyers drink of it and straightway become critics; an ex-Tammany spouter sips at it and passes Dickens and Thackeray in final review; a dry-goods man gulps it down and is transformed admittedly into an oracle on aesthetics. It is Circe's cup mixed over again, a new variation of the oldest confidence trick in the world. And whenever we have an English writer among us, a dozen New Yorkers will always fall victims to it.

Take, for instance, Mr. Bourke Cockran's speech at the dinner given by the Lotos Club to Mr. Anthony Hope. Mr. Cockran, up to quite recently, was one of the head braves in the Tammany Wigwam, distinguished among his fellow chieftains by an air of shrewd respectability. Mr. Cockran is also known as a great orator; as a matter of fact he can do no more than clothe commonplace thoughts in a fury of tempestuous words. However, taking Mr. Cockran at the popular estimate, we will admit his propriety as a lawyer, politician, and speaker. But has any human being ever thought of consulting Mr. Cockran as a literary critic? Does anybody suppose that he has any more capacity to judge of literature than Richard Croker himself? Yet the fatal cup was offered to him in the shape of an invitation to speak at the Lotos Club dinner, and Mr. Cockran had not the good sense to pass it on. He drank deeply, boisterously; with the effects described in *Comus* and elsewhere. A literary debauch is as disagreeable as any other kind of orgy; but the transcription of a few of Mr. Cockran's sentences at the height of his frenzy may serve as a silent and impressive sermon on the wisdom of the cobbler sticking to his last:—"In my judgment there is no living writer whose works can be compared with those of Mr. Hope." That is a good beginning, the first sign of the remoulding of reason's mintage. "I believe it is no disparagement of living writers to say that, since the hand of Charles Dickens fell helpless by his side, no one has wielded a pen of equal power, no one has drawn characters so forceful, so remarkable, and yet so natural. . . . I believe that Mr. Hope occupies now in the literature of this period the place which Charles Dickens occupied in the literature of another generation." The madness mounts, you perceive. Now for the whirlwind of delirium. "Hope's work, every single sentence of it, contributes to the progress of the century." After this, to say that Anthony Hope is more of an artist than either Dickens or Thackeray, and that the

"Prisoner of Zenda" is on a level with "Gulliver's Travels," seems almost like a lapse into sanity. By such antics do we entertain and captivate our visitors. Mr. Hope is entitled to our money and our grateful presence at his readings; but what has he done to deserve our dinners?

FURTHER RESEARCHES into Mr. Charles Dudley Warner's "Library of the World's Best Literature" have brought to light a preface. And this preface speaks in no halting fashion of the objects and performances of the editor and his advisory council; and of the intellectual benefits that will accrue to America from the presence of the Library in every American household. Our scepticism in this regard is immovable. What man ever learnt anything from an Encyclopedia? We cannot conceive, for example, of any reader being stimulated into a study of Addison by glancing over a few selections from his essays, prefaced by an eight or ten page introduction from Mr. Hamilton Mabie. Mr. Warner's "Library" must resolve itself either into a guide to the best books, in which case Sonnenschein's catalogues have made it unnecessary; or into a substitute for the books themselves, in which case it can hardly claim to be doing anything but serious harm to literature. We should be justified in warning possible purchasers against it, on general grounds alone. But when we come to consider the "Library" in detail, to contrast its actual ingredients with the promises of Mr. Warner's preface, an instinctive suspicion of the principle of the thing hardens into a concrete dislike for its visible exposition. Mr. Warner guarantees his "Library" to be "a conspectus of the thought and intellectual evolution of man from the beginning." The title he declares to be "strictly descriptive," a most important admission. "What is offered is taken from the best authors," and the collection, we are assured, "is representative of the scholarship and wide judgment of our time." On what possible critical basis, then, does Mr. Warner justify the inclusion of R. H. Dana, of Mary Mapes Dodge, of Conan Doyle, J. R. Drake, H. B. Fuller, Hamlin Garland, Edmund Gosse, Horace Greeley, P. G. Hamerton, Julian Hawthorne, and Colonel Higginson? Why does Du Maurier receive twenty-three pages and Miss Edgeworth only eleven? Does the "scholarship and wide judgment of our time" really consider Conan Doyle a better and more important writer than Euripides? If not, why does he appear in Mr. Warner's "Library" with an advantage of three pages over the Grecian dramatist? Who are Colonel Higginson and Mary Mapes Dodge, and why is an allotment of twenty pages made to each of them, when only sixteen are given to Grote, only fourteen to John Evelyn, only ten to Guizot, and only eight to Dekker, John Donne, and Henry Hallam? Can it be that their American



nationality has anything to do with it? If so, the omission of Mr. Richard Harding Davis and Mr. John Kendrick Bangs is inconceivable. If Aristophanes is thought worthy of twelve pages, a strict regard for Americanism demands at least eighteen for Mr. Bangs. The fact is Mr. Warner's compilation is not in any sense a library of the world's best literature. It is partly a piebald medley of the classical and the popular, and partly an appeal to the literary jingoes of the United States, a source of disgust to the real student and of utter bewilderment to the ignoramus for whose benefit it was constructed.

THE EDITOR OF *HARPER'S WEEKLY* deserves the grateful congratulations of all his readers on the engagement of Mr. Arnold White as the regular London correspondent of that excellent paper. Mr. White is a writer of exceptional force and clearness and a well-known public man, with a large personal acquaintance among statesmen and the leaders of English society. A happier selection could not have been made. For the first time in American journalism, an American paper of the best standing will present the English view of current English events—a most sensible and important innovation. Hitherto, our London correspondents have been the critics instead of the interpreters of England. They have supplied not only the news but the comment too, and inevitably from an American standpoint. It need hardly be added that such methods have resulted in a portrayal of the country at once distorted and untrustworthy. What can one expect when New York editors order their representatives to "rip the Britishers up the back?" That is not journalism, but a system of scribbling spies. Mr. G. W. Smalley was the only American correspondent who ever painted England in her true colors, and Mr. Smalley was called a "Tory squire" in consequence. A petty international jealousy has made our London correspondence bitterly partial and perverted. Therefore we welcome the opportunity to learn from *Harper's Weekly* and Mr. White something of England as she really is.

MR. FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE, the compiler of the *Golden Treasury*, died happily too soon to learn of his failure to repeat that exquisite success. The English papers were almost unanimously agreed that the "Second Series," published only a day or two before his death, was by no means the equal of its forerunner in critical judgment. But the *Golden Treasury* and the immense influence it had in fixing poetical taste may remain a sufficient monument for any man. No anthology was ever composed so harmoniously and tactfully, with such faultless discrimination, with so resolute a disdain for anything below the acknowledged best. A more perfect wreath was never laid on the altar

of English poetry, every flower of it a true "immortal amaranth," as fresh to-day as when they were first woven together thirty-six years ago. Mr. Palgrave was himself a lyrical poet of some felicity, a sensitive and clear-headed critic both of literature and art, and at all times a talker of enthralling charm. He held the Oxford Professorship of Poetry for ten years, and spent most of his time, in and out of the chair, defending against all comers the works of his friend and master, Alfred Tennyson.

THE FIRST NUMBER of *Literature* is pretty much what a many years' study of the London *Times* had prepared us for; very "safe" in the views and very dignified, rather heavily so, in its manner of expressing them, laboriously just in its criticisms, with patches of determined sprightliness; altogether a sober and authoritative organ, quite superior to anything of the kind we have here. An interesting flavor of the old quarterly reviews, possibly unattractive to the more restless among us, hangs around it. It is not precisely pedantry, nor dullness, nor conceit; rather let us say a candid recognition of its own importance, the pride of Sir Oracle opening his mouth. And the sounds emitted are readily distinguishable from the barkings of our yellow dogs. Whether they will be more attractive in America we should not care to prophesy. The first number is exclusively and unmitigatedly British in tone and subject; and therefore not fully representative, so we understand, of what the journal is hereafter to become. Some American dressing is badly needed. When that is added we shall have a pleasant concoction indeed, one that should be palatable everywhere. A plain British diet has no future in this country; but a joint feast, with America supplying the side dishes, ought to bring many a guest to the table.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT'S MONUMENT was unveiled toward the end of last month in the Parc Monceau, the pretty garden on which he and Zola and the rest of the famous Realist Circle used to look down every Sunday from the fifth floor of the great and kindly Flaubert. The monument is only half in Maupassant's honor. The remainder is an advertisement of the vanity of a well-known literary lady who took a deep interest in Maupassant, subscribed five thousand francs to the monument fund, and collected as much more; but on condition that her own full-length portrait should be brought in. Only Maupassant's bust is given. It is on a tall pedestal, at the foot of which the lady, fashionably dressed, reclines on a sofa of the chaise-longue species. Her feet, stretched out, touch the ground. Her dress is artfully arranged, as though by a *femme de chambre*. The fore-arms are bare, the upper arms covered with puffed sleeves. One arm is thrown negligently forward on the back of the sofa,



and the elbow of the other rests on a pillow while the hand belonging to it supports the head. The effect, says Mrs. Crawford in the London *Daily News*, is that of an advertisement in marble for some leading dressmaker. The lady's attitude is inspired by the following quotation from *Fort comme la mort*:—"Sit down, darling. There, take this volume of poetry, open it at page 336, and read the verses on poor folks. Drink them as you should the choicest wine, sipping every word, and let intoxication and tender feeling steal upon you. Listen well to the answer your heart gives. Then shut the book, raise your eyes, think and dream." The lady is raising her eyes according to the prescription. She symbolises, of course, the Parisienne, the impassioned reader of Maupassant; and the monument is so far typical of Paris that it could have been erected in no other city, though the self-assertion of the lady is altogether provincial.

THE NEW AND THE BOLD is to be upheld in New York and the delicate mystery of Bohemia is to be unveiled by a paper called *The Criterion*. This publication we have known for some time as a St. Louis weekly of considerable individuality and merit. It has been transported to New York, and there has gathered to itself all the remnants of the "miniature" magazine movement. In this sense it is an encouraging sight. Youth, independence, and a real love of art and letters—all this, embodied in a clique, a school after the Parisian fashion, is a sight to do American journalists good. *The Criterion* is iconoclastic, sprightly, and fearless, which is very well. But by the transfusion of blood from *Mlle. New York*, *The Fly Leaf*, *Cbips*, *The Echo*, and a number of other exponents of the New and the Bold, it has acquired other characteristics and presents a curiously nondescript and haphazard appearance. It is also at times silly, rambling, very wicked, in the Le Gallienne manner, astonishingly French by affectation, and extraordinarily journalistic in its critical judgments.

*The Criterion* is going to establish an *Independent Theatre*. This is very well. But in the *pronunciamiento* with which Mr. Percival Pollard heralds the enterprise, we find such a paragraph as this:

"I remember passing a theatre once where Jerome's play, 'The Councilor's Wife,' was being performed, and turning to a sombre theorist at my side with the remark, 'There's a thing you ought to see; it's by a man who can write.' The sombre person turned to me with the dismal query, 'Ah, but do you think he is in earnest?' There, you see, are the two gulfs fixed: the heedless, laughter-loving playgoer wishes to be entertained, and the humorless man, who takes his art as a burden, wishes to be sure that every one is in earnest."

To us an independent theatre, in the foyer of which Mr. Jerome K. Jerome's image is to be found labelled "a man who can write" is an anomaly.

*The Criterion* has multifarious interests and a host of new writers, most of whom would seem by their names to be of foreign extraction, mainly French. The reader is expected to know them all well, and be interested in every variation of their critical opinion. He is constantly addressed across the café table, and he is assumed to be a comrade and boon companion of each and every young genius who may write for the paper. Indeed, the intimacy of tone is something positively embarrassing. Such a passage as that with which Mr. Vance Thompson concludes an interview with Mr. Nevin seems to us indelicately personal, besides being very silly.

"A lyric youth, with gold-tipped cigarette and hair sown with gray—famous at thirty!"

"You remember the dreams we dreamed a decade ago in the old house in Friedrichstrasse?"

"I remember," he said.

"Yours were the dreams that came true."

"And yours?" he asked.

"I dropped my gilt-tipped cigarette into the coffee cup; it hissed and sputtered and went out—"

Here is the sweetness of Bohemia and art—lyric youth, gold and gilt-tipped cigarettes, and sloppy sentiment.

But it is not all like this, and although it is all prodigiously mincing and affected, it is fresh and varied, and new, and quite entertaining, and probably short-lived, unless the person who backs it be very rich.

A SHORT CUT to a moderate reputation has been for some few years the volume of *College Stories*. Books of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton stories have had considerable vogue, a popularity rather out of proportion to their actual merit. The collegian was flattered that the great outer world was willing to read about him, and he was somewhat dazzled by book covers, for he was used to college stories only in his own papers and magazines. Local color is a very seductive thing, especially when you have helped lay it on yourself. And so the student, carrying along with him his mother, his younger brothers, his sisters, and his fellow collegian's sisters, advertised the books throughout the land (only avoiding the editorial rooms of dignified and serious papers of criticism), gave them in short a popular, if not a critical, success. He did not carp at small inaccuracies, or even at dubiously successful attempts to reflect the real spirit of the college.

But it now appears that this route to fame was over very thin ice, for a Mr. Terhune has fallen through. *Columbia Stories* is the name of the volume which is now being vigorously denounced from the heights of Morningside. *The Columbia Literary Monthly* and *The Morningside* agree in condemning the volume, and in taking its publication as an insulting libel on their *alma mater*. Practical joking, caddishness, blasphemy, and intoxication, are not the most prominent features of Columbia's life; its

students object, with some show of reason, to the exclusion of the gentlemen and the scholar from a book bearing Columbia's name.

IN THE COLLEGE PUBLICATIONS, which have come to us this autumn, we have noted a welcome tendency to confine the editor's critical attention to matters naturally demanding his notice. With memories of intercollegiate contests over Mr. Le Gallienne and his *Golden Girl*, we approached the autumn issues of the college papers with a haunting fear that we should find reviews of *The Christian*, and attempts to find a place for Mr. Hall Caine in literature. But nothing of the sort appears. The editors, having proved their powers of self-restraint, might now to advantage enlarge their scope somewhat. It is not necessary to edit a college paper as though it were a competitor of the newspapers and the critical journals, nor is it on the other hand needful to have only one's own college public in view. Nothing, we believe, would help the literary atmosphere of our colleges more than a free interchange of publications. We wish that half the subscription list of the *Harvard Advocate* and the *Yale Courant* might be in colleges other than their own. We wish that the *Yale Courant*, for example, would be more eager to rival *The Morning-side* than to fight the *Yale "Lit,"* and we wish the *Harvard Lampoon* might take a few lessons in drawing from the *Yale Record*. With keen intercollegiate rivalry in intellectual matters we might hear less of the dangers of intercollegiate athletics. We already have "joint debates" which are a cumbrous and somewhat inadequate test of ability. But if every time a Harvard writer fumbled a subjunctive a Yale critic scored on him, his college pride might induce him to look upon English courses somewhat as he looks upon football practice. The usual college paper is dull and perfunctory, and the usual college student is not that. The reason is largely because the student body takes such a languid interest in the merits of its writers. But if the editing boards could only shake off their torpor and recognize what a really important work they could be doing, there would be no more *Bachelor of Arts* prize contests failing because nothing was submitted, and *The Century* would be sure of having work offered for its prizes that would amply justify them. The college student is not expected to produce the year's novel, its best criticism, or its ablest research. But he should try to show that he is going to do so after he is graduated.

IF THE WISE MAN were alive to-day he would make no wish, but abide in silence, perfectly satisfied that all his enemies would write books sooner or later, and books of verse at that. During the twelvemonth ending October 1—the close of one and the beginning of the next year among publishers

—not less than five hundred volumes containing original verses have been given to the English-speaking world. This does not include new editions, republications, or translations: every two years, as matters go nowadays, a full thousand new works, exhibiting more or less poetic ability, are dropped with a discouraging effect upon the head of the devoted student of contemporaneous English verse. From Tasmania, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Straits Settlements, the Rand, the Orange Free State, Newfoundland, the Bermudas, Hawaii, and various other places of a certain importance upon the face of the earth, come sporadic examples of men, women, and poesis in combinations of varying discretion, not to mention the steady stream, flowing like the rivers in the Garden of Eden, from the presses of the four great English-speaking nations, England, the United States, Australia, and Canada, this last showing a most amazing desire to make worthy amends for a protracted silence. The personalities behind these effusions are as assorted as their habitations. The missionary shuts out the howl of savages to assert rhythmically that only man is vile, the matron the screams of her offspring to compose a sonnet on true femininity. Even miners lay down their picks and shovels—the opening of spring will undoubtedly bring returns from the Klondike—to prove in blank verse that the greed for great riches is not the noblest attribute of man.

Women write epics to show the evils of vivisection, the anti-vaccinationists have a self-appointed laureate, university professors of poetry compose other epics to prove how readily susceptible the language of the Bible is of improvement, and children have their rhyming fancies made public to gratify an unhealthy public desire for notoriety. It is all very sad; for the yearly output already exceeds all that has come down to us from classical antiquity in quantity—nothing else; and the visible supply shows not the slightest sign of diminution. It has already become necessary to distinguish between minor poets and those *minimus*, these latter mere rhymesters, soiled snowflakes muddying the Parnassian stream. It is as certainly the age of poetastry and poeticules as of steel and steam.

The fact that five hundred persons publish books every year does not take into consideration those who exhibit their abilities in practically every number of every periodical published in our mother-tongue. These swell the number of self-appraised poets past ordinary belief. It may be conjectured that twenty thousand is none too large a figure to express the totality of all who have written, are writing, or shall be, or shall have been writing what they think is poetry before another year rolls drearily over them; and until the census officials give the matter proper attention, this rather informal statistic will have to stand. It may be used to prove at least one thing; the mute inglorious Milton is a thing of the past; he may be inglorious, but he is not mute.



THE LATE PROFESSOR DARMESTETER, under the head *Irish Political Ballads* in his book of *English Studies*, writes: "Some while ago, in Paris, I heard a young Englishwoman sing one of the prescribed ballads of 1798: *The Wearing of the Green*." The amiable professor being thereby set in motion, ranged Ireland over and obtained a number of unimportant variants of the ballad; but to his regret it remained anonymous. Yet it was not a far cry to the author—not nearly so far as 1798; for Dion Boucicault wrote it for *The Shaughraun* in the early '60's. Possibly some one will be making a similar investigation in regard to *God Save Ireland*, which betrays its youth, in this country at least, by adapting itself to that product of the Civil War, known as *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching*.

### DRAMATIC

THE LIVELY SPECULATION in American drama in the London market has just suffered a set-back, and the "bears," headed by Mr. Clement Scott, have weakened prices considerably. The boom was on to such an extent that Mr. Frohman never dreamed of failure in his Chinese-American play. There was a pretty little flurry of excitement in New York over the departure of *The Cat and the Cberub* and *The First Born* for England. The company which was to bring out Mr. Fernald's play stole away on a Wednesday. Mr. Frohman discovered this Thursday morning. Immediately he had a new company in rehearsal for *The First Born*, and on Saturday the original company started on a stern chase after *The Cat and the Cberub*, the unsyndicated rival. Both arrived safely in England, and failed with promptness and vigor. *The First Born* was retired at the end of six days. Mr. Clement Scott's verdict, being critically the least important, has been cabled. *The Cat and the Cberub*, he thinks, may do for a week or so as a music-hall "turn;" the other is not even good enough for that. What the other critics wrote we do not as yet know. We await with great interest the arrival of their articles. Until then it is quite impossible to explain the complete fiasco.

THE CHIEF PECULIARITY of Mr. George Bernard Shaw's pose is that no one is allowed to enjoy it but himself. Congratulations rouse Mr. Shaw's worst passions. Tell him he is a "brilliant" playwright and he will affect to call you a fool for your pains. The monopoly of appreciating Mr. Shaw rests with Mr. Shaw and no one else. Assure him that you sympathize with his vegetarianism and he at once will order a beefsteak. It is the simplest thing in the world to provoke a quarrel with Mr. Shaw. You have simply to praise him. The New York critics, for example, spoke well of *The Devil's Disciple*. Mr. Shaw was up in arms at

once, and wrote the following characteristic letter to the dramatic critic of the London *Daily Mail*:

"DEAR PHOEBUS,—There is only one New York daily paper that gives the story of *The Devil's Disciple* accurate. That is the *Times*. The part played by the husband, whom you have been misled into calling a villain, is altogether heroic. When he calls for his horse and rides off, his wife thinks he is running away to save his life, because she is a silly, romantic creature. The critics, being also silly, romantic creatures, think the same. What he actually does is to raise the countryside, organize resistance to the 'Continental' (the English), and force Burgoyne next morning to treat with him and release 'the D.'s D.' The point is, of course, that when the same emergency comes upon the two men, the devil's disciple shows the instinct of a saint, and goes to martyrdom; whereas the pious minister throws off his black coat and acts like a practical man and a first-rate soldier. Here is the speech he makes in the last scene:

ANDERSON (to General Burgoyne).—Sir, it is in the hour of trial that a man finds his true profession. This foolish young man boasted himself the Devil's Disciple; but when the hour of trial came to him, he found it was his destiny to suffer and be faithful to the death. I thought myself a decent minister of the gospel of peace; but when the hour of trial came to me, I found it was my destiny to be a man of action, and that my place was amid the thunder of the captains and the shouting. So I am starting life at fifty as Captain Anthony Anderson, of the Springtown Militia; and the devil's disciple here will start presently as the Reverend Richard Dudgeon, and wag his paw in my old pulpit, and give good advice to this silly, sentimental little wife of mine. Your mother told me, Richard, that I should never have chosen her if I'd been born for the ministry.

RICHARD.—Minister—I mean captain. I have behaved like a fool.

JUDITH.—Like a hero.

RICHARD.—Much the same thing, perhaps. But no! if I had been any good, I should have done for you what you did for me, instead of making a vain sacrifice.

ANDERSON.—Not vain, my boy. It takes all sorts to make a world—saints as well as soldiers.

"I think you will find this plain enough for plain people who look at a play for what is to be found in it, and not for opportunities of making foolish remarks about the "cynicism" and 'brilliance' of the author.

"You will remember that in *Arms and the Man*, when the soldier mentioned that he carried chocolate in his cartridge-box, the romantic heroine, who had never thought of a military hero as needing anything to sustain him but fresh air and glory, concluded that he meant confectioner's chocolate, and was disgracefully addicted to the eating of sweets. You will also remember that our critical colleagues, almost to a man, took the lady's view, and conveniently accounted for its silliness by my 'cynicism.' Well, that is just what has happened in New York. If the minister in *The Devil's Disciple* had called for the sword of his ancestors, sworn never to sheathe it until he had rescued Richard or fallen a cold corpse in the attempt, and dropped elegantly on one knee and kissed the hilt in pledge



thereof, the critics would have understood perfectly, and admired my simple and straightforward knowledge of human nature. Unfortunately, instead of doing this, the minister roars for his boots, sends a messenger flying to the inn for a fast horse, divides all the money in the house with his wife, refuses to 'bid her farewell' because it would waste twenty seconds, and dashes off to the rescue. His words are just ambiguous enough to take in his 'silly, sentimental wife,' and her silly, sentimental compeers in front. But at all events, she sees her mistake when her husband turns out to be a bigger man than she thought. The compeers in front see nothing, even when it is not only shown to them, but explained in the unmistakable words I have quoted.

"Is it worth while, do you think, my dear 'Phœbus,' to trouble one's self about the opinion of such a flock of ganders (including, I am sorry to say, one flattering goose)? I blush for my profession.

Yours truly, G. B. S."

### MUSICAL

THE NEW YORK NEWSPAPERS announce with some solemnity that the interest felt in Nietzsche's "Thus Spake Zarathustra" is curiously shown by the fact that a musical composition of the same name, by Richard Strauss, is to be given in New York, at the Metropolitan Opera House, by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Now, this interest in Nietzsche, as well as a strange ignorance on the part of the New York critics, is perhaps more curiously shown by the fact that last season the Chicago Orchestra, under Mr. Thomas's direction, twice played "Thus Spake Zarathustra."

It is not often that we feel the impulse, so common in these regions, to rush to Chicago's defense. But since Boston and Chicago are the only cities in the country where a first-class orchestra is maintained, it might have been hoped that, in musical matters, at least, the critics might have some knowledge of what was happening outside the metropolis.

### THE ROAD

PRAY, whither leads the road, fair heart?  
Say, whither leads the road?  
Across a rill, around a hill,  
Beside a dell where rivers start,  
Where bending nut-trees shed their load—  
Oh, thither leads the road, dear heart,  
Oh, thither leads the road.

What matter where the road may lead,  
So thou and I together go?  
Companionship is all our need,  
Division all our woe.

The pine-tree tall on yonder hill  
For years has watched the passer-by;  
When he is dust we shall be still  
Together, thou and I.

How hushed the afternoon! I dare  
Not whisper love, but send the thought  
In speechless message. All the air  
In Silence' thrall is caught.

Oh, these are God-reared trees! How soft  
The wind-dreams round their tall heads creep,  
The drowsy leaves that doze aloft  
Stir like a child in sleep.

Young Autumn's fire begins to burn  
The brands to hurl at Winter's brow;  
The sun-wooded leaves sigh low, and turn  
To crimson on the bough.

Pray, whither leads the road, fair heart?  
Say, whither leads the road?  
Across a rill, around a hill,  
Beside a dell where rivers start,  
Where bending nut-trees shed their load—  
Oh, thither leads the road, my heart,  
Oh, thither leads the road.

JOHN ALBERT MACY.

### CORRESPONDENCE

#### MR. KIPLING'S COCKNEY RHYMES

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 27, 1897.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHAP-BOOK:

THE whole history of many books is—that they are born, reviewed, die, and are forgotten. Sometimes the critics kill them, but much oftener it happens that they die because they have not sufficient vitality to live.

But such a book as *The Seven Seas* of Mr. Rudyard Kipling is of so robust a constitution that THE CHAP-BOOK, as well as other literary journals, continues to print interesting paragraphs concerning it, although it is no longer the newest important book of the year; and I think they will go on doing so until some better and stronger book of original poems shall appear—an event which we need not expect for many a long day.

It would be a thankless task for me to attempt merely to find fault with such a work; and what I have to say concerning it is more in the way of pointing out a minor "curiosity of literature" connected with the author's art of versification than an attempt to find little faults in the poems of a master.

The curiosities in question are the egregious cockney rhymes—the only false ones—that mar some of Mr. Kipling's verses. To the millions of English-

speaking people whose ears and tongues are not viciated by the mincing affectation of contemporary London speech, these false rhymes come with an unpleasant little shock, which may be compared to the sudden spit of cold sea-water that flies in the tourist's face while, from the deck of an Atlantic steamer, he is absorbed in contemplating the glories of the ocean.

Among the great qualities of Mr. Kipling's poems the critics have justly commended the immense technical skill (as well as the variety) of his versification. Rhymes seem to obey him almost as the piano keys obey Paderewski; and it is therefore not to be thought that these cockney rhymes exist through any poverty of resource on the author's part. The only conclusion we can come to is that he himself pronounces the English language a good deal as our ancient friend, Lord Dundreary, did, and that he believes such pronunciation to be correct. I may be using the wrong term in characterizing such pronunciation as "cockney." It certainly is not the cockney speech of such common folk as "'Arry" and "'Arriet," but it is also far removed from the sound and clear pronunciation of such a scholar as Mr. Gladstone or the faultless rhyming of an artist like Tennyson.

Such defects may never be detected till a man writes in rhyme—just as a person may be color-blind all his life and never suspect it till he comes to paint a picture; and even then the false coloring which startles normally endowed people still seems right and true to him. We may be sure that so eminent a literary artist as Oliver Goldsmith must have believed it right to omit the sound of the / in the word fault (Irishmen, to this day, pronounce it "fawt"), for in *The Deserted Village* he makes it rhyme with "aught," and in the ballad of Edwin and Angelina, with "sought."

Similarly, if we sound these words of Mr. Kipling's cockney-wise, the rhymes become perfect; but if we sound them in straight English—out come the defects. They would hardly be defects if they occurred in the poems written in avowedly cockney dialect, but this is very rarely the case in the examples which follow, and which are cited from the American edition of *The Seven Seas*. I give in parentheses the current cockney or Lord Dundreary pronunciation of each defective rhyme.

On page 5 we find the word "horses" as a rhyme for "courses"—not such a bad rhyme as it stands, but it at once becomes perfect as pronounced by a Cockney—(cawses). Page 25 gives us "abroad" and "Lord"—(Lawd). On page 38 and again on page 45, in that masterpiece, *McAndrew's Hymn*, we find "port" as a rhyme for "thought"; "pawt" makes the rhyming perfect—but fancy the grim and rugged old Scotch engineer making use of such a prettified word! What he really did say (for McAndrews, like Falstaff, is alive and real) was not "pawt" but *porrt*—rolling his *r* with a rich burr, like the sound of one of his own "purrin'

dynamoses." On page 74 we have "walk" and "pork" (pawk); page 86, "calm" and "harm" (hahm); page 131, "ma" and "are" (ah); page 157, "straw" and "corps" (caw); pages 160-161, "Gawd" and "sword" (sawd); pages 177 and 180, "salaam" and "harm" (hahm).

All this may have been publicly pointed out already, but I have not seen it.

FREDERICK KEPPEL.

## THE ROMANTIC ESSAY

WHATEVER we may be as a literary generation, we are not lazy. We work hard on our pseudo-genius productions. The most popular book of the year reports six barrels of refuse, the result of careful hacking, and shaving, and planing, and polishing. We are worthy of our hire. As readers we show a like conscientiousness. We resent instruction or information. We wish our author to let us do our own inferring and connecting. It is the fashion of the hour to assume that every one knows everything. A writer is careful to recall forgotten facts. He knows that we no longer read him to acquire the facts. We read him to see what he thinks about them. We read him, in a word, as literature.

All of which indicates an advance in literary appreciation. Our ancestors, barring Charles Lamb, were, it would seem, less discriminating. A great many "books, which are books," masqueraded among them as literature. There was a dangerous tendency to regard even history as a collocation of facts, and the author as only another, and humbler, one. We have made, at least, the advance of caring more for the spirit and less for the substance, more for Carlyle and less for the French Revolution. We are even beginning dimly to see that, without Carlyle, the French Revolution would have been a poor, inadequate affair, lacking in gore and irony and invective, and in crashing and snorting and blasting. Without Carlyle, indeed, where were Cromwell and Frederick—now the Great—and John Sterling and Goethe, and even Samuel Johnson? Without Carlyle, where were the Romantic essay, the most intensely personal form of literature the world has known?

Out of the slow, stubborn Scotch genius, that could never bend the knee, not even to poverty; that insisted on telling what he, Carlyle, thought about things, out of the Baphometric baptism,—came a new literature, transcendently personal, the flowering of the Romantic essay in English letters. Plenty of men in London could write page after page of pleasant reading easily, tranquilly, with even temper and unruffled brow. We have reason to be grateful that in the length and breadth of the land, there was one man who could lay bare his quivering heart,

seething in rebellion, torn by a thousand doubts, and call it literature. The reading world was accustomed to a something that stood vaguely for brilliant ornament, or classic allusion, or euphonious sentence structure. Style, if it were not, as Lord Chesterfield had pleasantly called it, "the dress of thought," was, at least something as comely and decent. It was not the naked thought of a man, clad only in the mystery of soul. With such a public as this there could be little market for the wares of one who fused himself into every sentence that he wrote. The characteristic, though perhaps unconscious, humor with which the author of "Sartor Resartus" sought to turn farmer, recognizing in the vegetable market a better opening for his talents, is not without its pathetic side.

But there is evolution even in stupidity. The Romantic essay has become the characteristic expression of our time. If a man, in his work, can not give himself, he may as well let the ink dry on his pen. To fashion it into words will be labor wasted. We want to know his inmost heart, or the inmost hearts of his friends and relatives; or, if the note must be a little less personal, we want to know what inmost thoughts he has had on outside things. The favorite of the hour may write on Old China or Biblical genealogies—the subject is immaterial; we care only to know what is being thought and felt on it by a living man.

Appearances are undoubtedly against this theory. The standard magazines continue the printing of essays, with the same timidity of color they have had for the last fifty years. We turn to them for the way to the North Pole, or facts about the late Civil War, or traits of the Japanese, not for literature. In spite of this disfavor in high places, the Romantic essay has not only continued to be; it has called into existence an entirely new kind of publication. One can now count, in America, no less than seven distinctively literary journals, which have come into being almost within as many years, in all of which the Romantic essay finds room. At least one of them has from the first paid special attention to the personal, vital writing which is characteristic of our time, but which—always excepting fiction—previous publications had uniformly ignored. The inevitable result will be, history always repeating itself, that in coming years the student of literature must turn to these literary periodicals to learn what spirit was moving on the face of the waters in the later years of this century.

Except possibly in the pages of a single monthly, where does one find the names that give us, from the past, a claim to literature? Here and there, in some perhaps short-lived, but clear-sighted, magazine or newspaper: fugitive pieces, not worthy the attention of a journal of weight. *The Atlantic*, started to voice the most literary group of men the country has known, has remained, on the whole, true to its traditions. But whether to-day a new

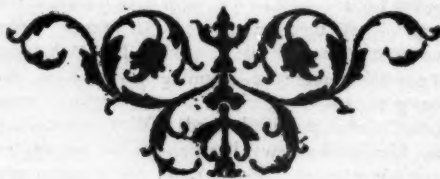
Autocrat, grown into the scope of modern thought—now that the old has become authentic and classic—would find acceptance, even in the *Atlantic*, is an open question. To paraphrase Walter Pater, we have among us many critics who would never have discovered for themselves the charm of any work, whether new or old; who value what is old in literature for its accessories, and chiefly for the conventional authority that has gathered about it—people who would never really have been made glad by any Autocrat fresh-risen from the breakfast table, and who praise the Autocrat of Boston only because they fancy him grown into something staid and tame.

Faults the Romantic essay undoubtedly has, transcendent ones. The grandiloquent "methinks" of early Romantic fiction is paralleled by the more insistent "I think" of a form which is nothing if not egoistic. But its egoism has much the same relation to that of the essay proper as *L'Enfant Terrible* to a wax doll. You cannot ignore it, however much you may affect to. The embarrassing habit of calling attention to itself, and telling family secrets, is atoned for, however, by the fact that one finds it alive and human and generally likable.

It has taken on many ephemeral forms. Some of them are winged, like *The Lark* and *The Fly-Leaf*; some web-footed, sticking their bills in the mud, like the *Yellow Bird*; and some heavy-footed, jauntily lumbering, after the manner of *The Philistine*; but all with the shadow of dignity that comes from being alive—if only for a day.

Where the Romantic essay will appear next, or under what guise, is not easy to foretell. It offers no certainties but the certainties of life. That its freshness will often be mere crudity we may assume as inevitable. That its sharpness will sometimes be only smartness is probable. But that its colossal interest in itself will always make it interesting we have every reason to feel assured. We have a watchful hope that when this unwieldy Caliban, babbling of itself and Setebos and the universe in general, shall have become yet more human, more articulate and firm-fibred, it will furnish an answer to the vexed question whether the essay can ever become an art form. Under the beauty and grace of its expression will lie life. Out of its mystic face will look a human soul.

JEANNETTE BARBOUR PERRY.





## YALAN MOHAMADAC

**"M**E American now, no more Syrian. Before in Beyrout me Christ', sure."

Abdullah Tiger ground his big fist into the table, and, throwing back with his left hand the kaffeia that hung around his neck down over his cotton shirt, he pounded his chest till it sounded like drumming on a tub. He glared defiance at the groups of Greeks and Syrians in the café; the long black tassel at the peak of his fez slapped the challenge in the very face of Zariack, the pock-marked soldier at his elbow, who had served, though a Christian, with Rustem Pasha in Lebanon. But not a man moved or spoke.

The café was crowded with the black little men of the colony. They were talking over their evening coffee of the war in Greece. The room, a long, narrow, low-ceiled basement five or six steps below the level of Washington Street, was foggy with the smoke of cigarettes and hubble-bubbles. Except for their excited eyes, and here and there an eager pose, the motionless, silent listeners in the back of the room looked like mere silhouettes.

Tiger, the popular café-keeper, was a tall, strong man—among his countrymen he was a giant. What distinguished him still more from them was his light coloring, his red-brown hair and mustache, and his snappy hazel eyes. But the charms that brought him success in his business were his rough, good-nature and his brutal Syriac patriotism, and the contradiction of both these characteristics in his speech and his manner astonished everybody.

Zariack was resting his throat on the edge of the table, his lips on a level with the tiny cup of Turkish coffee which he sipped at between puffs at a cigarette; his eyes drew down to dots, but he did not look at Tiger. The barber near the glass-door pointed out to his customer two dancing girls exchanging greetings in the light of the street lamp on the sidewalk, but when the women grimaced humorously at them the men did not smile. The only sound in the room came from behind a lattice partition in the rear, where an old woman was squatted on her haunches monotonously grinding coffee on a stone.

Tiger fixed, one by one, with his eyes each Greek and Syrian in the café; then his glance rested on the bunch of water-pipes and copper utensils that glittered on the lattice, and his face softened. He saw next a colored print of the Czar on the wall opposite, and he sat down.

The street door opened, letting in a draught of clean, cold air that drove wildly through the lolling clouds of smoke and made the smokers shiver and frown. The sparkling eyes of a smiling, painted face with beautiful teeth peered in at the opening. It was one of the dancing girls.

"May I dance?" she asked in Arabic, when she had picked out the proprietor.

Tiger shrugged his shoulders; then sprang up and answered:

"Yes; come in, come in Lili."

He climbed over his nearest customers to the centre of the room, where he pushed a table out of the way. In the space he cleared he stood, fist on hip and a merry twinkle in his eyes, watching the girl as she flung off her outer garments, uncovering a thin gauze-like costume which barely concealed her form. When she was ready, she laughed nervously, and Tiger waved his hand toward the wall where a drum hung. Zariack tossed the instrument to him, and he began to beat time.

The girl trod a slow mincing measure with her feet, while her legs stiffened and bent alternately and her body sidled sensuously. She grinned till the paint on her face threatened to crack; then, as Tiger cocked himself on the corner of a table and quickened the time, she sobered, her expression became dreamy, and, holding her feet faster together, her legs straightened and relaxed just a little behind the drum beat. Her hips worked jerkily, also out of time but yet in movements harmonious with the periods of the dance.

Those of the men who happened to sit facing her looked on indolently; the others did not take the trouble to turn their heads.

Tiger gave the drum to Zariack, who caught up the time without losing a beat, and the café-keeper joined in the dance. His first steps were as soft and gentle as the girl's, but gradually, at ever-shortening intervals, he threw in sudden, violent strides toward her, and these shuddering movements were brutally male. Each of these steps brought him nearer to the girl. She retreated with mimic shyness, but much less than he gained. Her step became quieter, the motion fading away, her head sinking forward, her body falling limp. They touched and Tiger laughed. The girl and the drum stopped.

Tiger's face straightened out, and, pushing his way roughly back to the table, he struck the board and said fiercely:

"Goddamma; dis Sultan no good."

"Why we here?" cried Zariack unexpectedly, sitting erect and opening his eyes wide. "Why me come New York? Why Tiger?"

Having spoken, Zariack slipped down comfortably into his chair and puffed dreamily his cigarette.

The dancing girl approached Tiger pleadingly.

"Get out," he commanded, with a wave of his arm. "Get out; go home, you!"

He watched the girl retreat, and waited sternly till she began to dress. Then he turned majestically to Zariack.

"Me?" he said. "Why me here? Hear me in the Syriac and I tell you why me good Christian come New York be good 'Merican man."

There was a general dragging of chairs: the barber stayed his razor and his customer faced about,

the old woman stopped grinding coffee, the waiter came close. They all knew the story well.

"Yalan saleebac—curses on your Cross."

Tiger yelled the familiar insult. He pushed back his fez, threw out his arms, snarled up his face, and shrieked again:

"Yalan saleebac."

"Yalan Mohamadac," echoed the infuriated Christians; "curses on Mohammed."

"Yalan saleebac," Tiger repeated. "I heard it when a child in Beyrout, and feared it; I heard it when a boy, and I hated it; I heard it as a man in Lebanon, and I despised and defied it. They called it after me when I passed by the Mussleman garrison to go to work in the city, and they spat it at me when I went back to the quarter in the evening. It was laughed into the church door as we prayed."

"Yalan Mohamadac," muttered his darkfaced auditors.

"They called it after our funerals."

"Hate the Turk?" Tiger almost choked with rage.

"Yalan Mohamadac," he bawled. And the café rang with the cry. Then as every one tingled with the excitement of his fury, he relaxed his pose, rose stealthily, and moved off softly to the space made for the dancing girl. There he turned to the heaving Greeks and Syrians, and, in a quiet, intense tone, said:

"But one night when I went home I found—"

He paused for the muttered curse that grumbled around the room.

"I found that the soldiers of the Sultan, angry because we had jeered at one of their ridiculous funerals, had gone into the quarter, setting fire to the Christian houses, plundering, and outraging our women. The girl preserved for me from the sight of all men—even from mine—she was a victim."

"Yalan Mohamadac!" roared the Christians.

"A thousand times yes. But I, Abdullah Tiger, took a sister of her the Mussleman dogs had stolen, took her and her family and all the women of the Christian quarter, and in the hour of prayer in the mosque I appeared before the Mohammedans. With the cross in my left hand and the sword in my right, uplifted to heaven, thus I went to the door of the mosque there in the square, and, fearing nothing, I cried out in a loud voice: 'Eza cintoo regal, admoo.'"

Tiger stood as he did when he challenged the Turks, erect, shoulders back, head high, arms out as if the sword and cross were in his hands. His eyes were wide and his nostrils spread. He looked fierce. Then a smile of withering scorn broke over his face, and he added:

"But not one among them was a man, and none came on."

"Yalan Mohamadac!" The triumph and scorn in the curse made it rattle like a laugh.

After the café was silent again, Tiger continued:

"My people there and then gave me, and I accepted, the sister of her the Turks had taken to themselves, and I led her veiled up to the mosque, where I showed I was as fortunate as they, bade them come and get her if they dared. But they pretended to pray, so we returned to our part of the city and made ready in great haste, my bride and I, to escape to the wilderness. For eighteen days we wandered among the mountains. Then we came upon a caravan bound for the coast near Lebanon, and, hiring a camel from Zariack, we went down into that city to dwell among the other victims of the accursed Turk."

"Yalan Mohamadac!"

"Nor is that the end," said Zariack when Tiger stopped and sat down. "I also was outlawed, and was trying to earn a living by smuggling tobacco into the city. A mussleman merchant gave us mules to bring up tobacco from the ships on the coast. When Tiger joined us there were six in our party, and we profited exceedingly till Rustem Pasha set prices on our heads and sent out soldiers to take us. The police could not do it. We left the road strewn with their carcasses, and even the soldiers were not equal to us, with their old-fashioned guns. We shot them like dogs. But Rustem Pasha finally fixed—the tyrant!—the penalty of death for smuggling, which cut off the business utterly."

"Yalan Mohamadac!" hummed the angry chorus.

"So we came away to this free country," said Tiger, shaking off the nightmare; "we came here with our wives, and—well, now we are through with the Sultan and his Turks."

"And your wife, Tiger? We have never seen her."

"Oh, she!" he answered, frowning. "She is a Syrian. She is no American. After I took out my first papers I gave her the old cross and drove her with the sword out of my house; for I mean, when I get my last papers, to have an American wife."

The dancing girl, who had been waiting patiently for Tiger to finish his tale, came humbly towards him now, holding out her hand. He drew himself up, tossed back his head, and with a graceful swing of his arms he assumed the attitude he took as he described the defiance of the praying Turks.

"Go, you!" he commanded. "Get away out of here! Quick; go home!"

The woman wrapped her head and face in a shawl and slunk out of the door. When the door fell shut after her, Tiger tapped his brawny chest proudly.

"Me American now; no more Syrian, sure." \*

And some of the dim figures in the back of the room, not understanding Tiger's English, muttered in chorus,

"Yalan Mohamadac!"

J. L. STEFFENS.



## THE POET

**G**OD, give me breath for one brave fight—  
For one great deed that the world will  
hear;  
If not, then God give me night.

Night, with a candle to light the gloom,  
And the comfort shadows and twilight cheer,  
Crowding like friends in the room.

God, give me valor, and courage, and breath,  
For one great fight that the stars will see;  
If not, then God give me Death.

Death, with one candle to light the gloom  
From the church to the door of Eternity—  
Where, Lord, Thou wilt portion my doom.

Better the death, ere the beard be grown,  
Than the idle waiting with sheathed sword—  
Uncheered, uncrowned, unknown.

God, give me breath for one fight more—  
For one great fight in Thy name, oh Lord;  
If not, then close me the door.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Thus sang the Dreamer, with hands along  
The clanging strings, — then, loosing his lyre,  
He flushed with the pride of his song;

For he was a poet, and lived in the gleam  
Of the wonderful deeds that he touched to fire;—  
How brave he was in his dream!

THEODORE ROBERTS.

## SOME LOST BOOKS

**I**T was a juvenile critic of mine, who, after listening impatiently to a fairy-tale, finally broke out into downright contempt with "What rot! Why don't you do something like *Whispers from Fairy-land*?"

Why not, indeed? Despair sweeps over one at the recollection of the lost books—the beneficent givers of that first thrill. My own little girlhood is not so long past that their names are forgotten, but they are none the less quite lost—the spirit has left the pasteboard tenement. I may see the worn and neglected bodies huddled on some nursery book-shelf, but I know better than to take them down. So, instead, let us lay a wreath on their tombs.

How few of the lost ones provided that first taste of literature, new to the unjaded palate! A baker's dozen, some standards twisted into queer perspectives, some tales of unashamed adventures, some fairy-tales. Many of these are in a literal sense lost to me. *Whispers from Fairy-land*, for instance, I have not handled for years; some, like Mayne Reid, are stiff and speechless. Is it possible

that I could have been found, enthralled and shuddering, over what reads now like a bare catalogue of butchery—we went out in the morning and shot a deer; we went out in the afternoon and shot a buffalo; we went out in the evening and shot whatever nocturnal predator you like?

Of Sir Knatchbull-Hugessen's book I cherish the most tender memories. No later character-study has ever given me the same artistic satisfaction as the unimitable Rindlegrover, nor have I ever faced a psychological situation in company with a modern heroine with the same intensity as when, with "Molly" of the Witches' Island, I beheld the awful notification, "Man-traps and spring-guns in these woods!"

The *Arabian Nights*, on the other hand, is a corpse indeed. The other day I read an old copy from end to end, and emerged with a weary disgust. Yet my early remembrances hold a glittering caravan of caliphs, merchants, and slaves, these last always the recipient of attentions astounding to my immature mind, to which the word implied poverty, hoe-cakes, and an aggressive piety. Then there were Djinns (delightful word!), Afreets, and one-eyed calendars, and ladies who preferred a diet of dead bodies—one and all, now equally savorless and contemptible. Yet I have not forgotten the time when the device for introducing Prince Camaralzaman to the Princess Badoura appealed to my intelligence as both elegant and ingenious; the time when a version of that incident skillfully dressed and dished-up by my too-vivid imagination was my contribution to the conversation at a family re-union, the suppression thereof and my total extinction being the very first inklings I had of objections on the score of what to me was a mysterious propriety!

In the same way I never could understand why the domestic arrangements of King Charles II, as detailed and elaborated by me, aged eight, were received with so marked a lack of appreciation. Some kind relative favored me with the presentation of Hepworth Dixon's *Tower of London* which she had not read, but had been assured that it made history entertaining. It did, alas, only too well! There is another volume which has also joined the legions of the lost. The name, I think, was *Lillian's Golden Hours*; in character it was sensational and religious. Later on, claimed by Mrs. Molesworth and Ballantyne the bold, I grew to have but a dim fondness for Lillian and her adoring parents—who permitted monkeys, parrots, dogs, and guinea-pigs to join the circle round the family breakfast table, and whose liberality in the matter of ponies assumed supernatural proportions. The story lacked no element of excitement, for, in addition to this menagerie and the piety of the heroine, it contained the most appalling villain, a talented and neglected Italian boy, gypsies, and the delightful circumstance of a wicked uncle eaten by rats!

Equally lost and equally beloved is a little old



story entitled *Queer Bonnets*. An account of crisp French rolls in the opening chapter used to tickle my palate greatly. Like the Auton children in that delightful record, I was oddly affected by description. I can distinctly recall a picnic, partaken by the family who were marshalled in the 'Bessie' books, and where the mention of bananas gave me the most violent indigestion. In another book, when the rich uncle from India sends home pina dresses and ruby necklets, which of course are taken from the pious daughter and given by the unnatural parent to the spoiled beauty—the mere opening of the boxes holding these treasures used to make my mouth water. It must have been the same idea which caused my astonishment at the extraordinary behavior of 'young Porphyro'—he who could leave the 'lucent syrups tinted with cinnamon' and other dainties, to flee into the night with Madeline on the Eve of St. Agnes.

I am not at all certain if the first two or three of Sir Walter's are not to be reckoned among the lost. Certainly the *Ivanhoe* and *Abbot* I pick up now are not the books which guided and governed the very pursuits of life for months at a time. Those were days when belief in the innocence of Mary, Queen of Scots, was a vital matter, touching one's honor; when *Cœur-de-Lion* formed the subject of whispered discussions in bed after the lights were put out, and "drinks of water" administered; discussions—often rising to such heights of eloquence as to provoke the descent of an exasperated parent. A new Scott, once read and discussed, was finally acted by players who never asked an audience. Very often the preparations for these theatrical representations absorbed so much time that the play itself came to little, but on occasion we were powerfully swayed by our imaginations. It is an authentic anecdote that the governess once arrived posthaste in the nursery to demand the cause of an outburst of grief. She took me in her lap, disregarding the splendor of my appearance, and her sympathy caused me to unbosom my trouble—"Oh, it's Richard parting from Berengaria, and it's too dreadful!"

The Shakespeare period, which followed hard upon the heels of Scott, I cannot in any sense regard as lost. True, advancing years and the pressure of convention prevent me from any longer accosting harmless old ladies in the open street with—

"Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my prayers remembered!"

And I no longer greet the maid who wakens me every morning, with Macbeth's famous outburst—

"The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!"

Our servants were never appreciative. I remember one of them going to my mother to say that she

would not stay and be sworn at. My contemptuous defence—"Why, mamma, I was only *quoting*,"—was not considered sufficient, and from that time forth, indiscriminate Shakesperianisms were put a stop to.

My own dramatic imagination never carried me to the lengths of another little girl, a friend of mine, who, to her father's huge delight, used to enact "Hamlet," with a *dramatis personæ* composed of her toy animals. A noble spotted horse was the "sweet prince;" Claudius, a pig whose head came off and one could put lollypops inside; Ophelia, a graceful bird with preposterous tail-feathers. The "Hamlet" which made this possible I regard as wholly lost, no variorum contains a shred of it—and she has never been able to find it since.

ANNA ROBESON BROWN.

## DRAWN BATTLE

### A CHORUS

THE heavy, heavy nights are on him like  
the ground,  
And all the bitter days are over like the  
sea;

And even thus, O gods! whom think ye to have  
bound,

Nothing other now to do, nowhere else for aye to be.

Never stagnant nor asleep Enceladus is found  
In the shell of doom alive, and invincible, and free,  
By the knowledge and the will and the pleasure  
wrapped around

Of the thing that he would do, in the place where  
he would be.

Whence the profit, whose the odds,  
Feeble gods?

One before you disavowed,  
Woven ruin for his shroud,

Is more crafty, is more proud, is more calm than  
are ye:

We that search and would torment  
His intent,

Meet yourselves as in a well,  
But can track not, neither tell,

If this man indeed rebel so to do, and so to be.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.



## LOVE AND TIME

**A** CROSS the gardens of Life they go,  
 A strange ill-mated pair:  
 By paths where naught but blossoms  
 blow,  
 By paths neglected where gaunt weeds grow,  
 But hand in hand, through joy and care,  
 Across the gardens of Life they go.

The one is old, and grim, and gray;  
 His eyes stare off like one in dreams,  
 Across his breast the white locks stray,  
 The sands in his glass fall day by day,  
 Over his shoulder the scythe-blade gleams,—  
 And he is old, and grim, and gray.

And one is young, and bright, and fair;  
 The golden curls about his head  
 Shine as a halo; his red lips dare  
 The birds in song; he knows no care,  
 Joy in his heart is never dead,—  
 He lives to love and he is fair.

Hoar-headed Time was never young;  
 And Love on earth can ne'er grow old;  
 And yet—since first to that hand he clung,  
 Since first his tender song he sung,  
 Since first his love-tale he had told,  
 And to a dart his bow had strung,

Together, through ways of joy and woe,  
 Though one is old and one is fair,  
 By paths where nought but blossoms blow,  
 By paths neglected where gaunt weeds grow,  
 Together—a strange ill-mated pair—  
 Across the gardens of Life they go.

BEATRIX DEMOREST LLOYD.

## THE VERY MINOR POET

**O**NCE upon a time I met my first Very Minor Poet. I had arrived rather early (it was to be a dinner party), and my hostess had taken me up to a lady whom I instinctively felt to be a lioness, from her portly dignity and from her air—like that of Mrs. Farrinder in *The Bostonians*—of always being introduced by a few remarks. On the way, my hostess whispered that the lady was Mrs. Something-or-Other, “a poetess, quite distinguished,—had just published a volume of sonnets, you know,—privately printed.”

I was very young and didn't know how to talk to poets; I tried to remember hurriedly how Thackeray's people addressed Poseidon Hicks and Miss Bunion, but had to give it up. In a moment, however, after the first flush of the meeting, I

managed to get out a few polite inanities. Now, it is a remarkable fact that whenever you are forced to talk to an author, you are inevitably turned into a hypocrite, whether you want to be or not. So I finally asked my first Very Minor Poet if she did n't love to write such beautiful sonnets (you will observe I had n't read them).

Whereupon she replied with a delicate little smile of deprecation, as if after all they were mere trifles, but she really had an epic or two up her sleeve: “Ah, yes!—it's a graceful art!”

And this, I think, is the secret of one's enjoyment in writing very minor poetry: it's a graceful art. Enjoyment in writing, I say, not in reading it, for, except myself, I know of singularly few people who really like to read “fugitive poems.” Of course there are many who profess to care for them, but it is easy to detect impostors, and the real lovers, the *cognoscenti*, are few. The most distinguished of this small transfigured band of lovers of very minor poetry is, without question, that enthusiastic publisher, Mr. John Lane, of Vigo Street. It is his efforts alone that have made the end of the Victorian era of English literature chiefly remarkable for the indefatigable production of very minor poetry.

Since my meeting with the lady who justly considered the manufacture of sonnets a graceful art, I have known a great many Very Minor Poets. Indeed, I have even, on occasions, been a Very Minor Poet myself (one characteristic of the American Orpheidai is that they rarely publish). But it will perhaps be well first to define, with some particularity, what I mean by Very Minor Poets.

In the first place, the most striking difference between the Minor Poet and his Very Minor brother is that between the professional and the amateur. Now, Longfellow, tried by this criterion, is surely a Minor, rather than a Very Minor Poet; for there is a glib professionalism about his verses that is very satisfying to the critic of technique, together with several charming qualities. Of course if we are to apply the prefix “Minor” to Longfellow's title, every one, I fancy, will agree that it should stand unqualified: there are, however, many worthy and patriotic souls who, with a love of sentimentality that far from does them discredit, will protest at our use of even the term “Minor.” To these I should reply in the words of a witty but testy college professor who was being pestered by a woman with leading questions as to Longfellow's ultimate position in English literature: “Tell me what great poet you rate next to Longfellow, and I'll tell you where you teach school.”

Another characteristic of the Minor Poet as distinguished from the Very Minor Poet is that to read the former is, on the whole, worth while. Just here some one will object that, as I started out with the intention of eulogising the latter, this admission does away with any justification for going on to him;

but there is too much to be said in praise of doing what is n't worth while to give up so supinely. A very good paper could be written on "Doing What Is n't Worth While." I should like to have Mr. Lang take a try at it. It really will pay if you have that ample leisure without which cultivation languishes, to follow Mr. Bliss Carman when he is slouching about in his "Vagabondia," for he may even, with characteristic license, force you to stalk over the border line, when once in a great while he takes it into his head to walk arm in arm with Mr. Kipling in the greater company. Nor will you regret a few hours spent over the remains of the late Edward Cracroft Lefroy, who could with some reason lay claim to the title of Minor Poet, in his own day at least, even if he had written nothing more than the sonnet, "A Palaestral Study." John Addington Symonds was so charmed with it that he quoted it at length. His example may be followed on the principle that you cannot have too much of a good thing.

"The curves of beauty are not softly wrought;  
These quivering limbs by strong hid muscles held  
In attitudes of wonder, and compelled  
Through shapes more sinuous than a sculptor's  
thought,  
Tell of dull matter splendidly distraught,  
Whisper of mutinies divinely quelled,—  
Weak indolence of flesh, that long rebelled,  
The spirit's domination bravely taught.  
And all man's loveliest works are cut with pain.  
Beneath the perfect art we know the strain,  
Intense, defined, how deep soe'er it lies.  
From each high masterpiece our souls refrain,  
Not tired of gazing, but with stretched eyes  
Made hot by radiant flames of sacrifice."

But on copying this down I am more than half inclined to think that it really is not minor poetry after all.

Still another characteristic of the Minor Poet is that he is the only one whom you may justly call charming. That this is true is easily shown: if you were to call Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and many others simply "charming," and let it go at that, you would feel just a little bit ashamed of yourself. You may, however, call the Minor Poet "charming" in public without a blush. (On the other hand, again, you may call the Very Minor Poet "charming" with impunity only when you are very tightly locked up.) Tested simply by this adjective, Mrs. Meynell has so just a claim to the title of Minor Poet that to quote from her would be a work of supererogation. Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson, too, is one of the few people now publishing who meet this requirement. If you have not yet read him, open his last volume, *Lord Vyet and Other Poems*, and turn to the lyric, "When Punctual Dawn." For that matter, though, you have only to read the very lovable "Dedication":

"Friend, of my infinite dreams  
Little enough endures;  
Little howe'er it seems,  
It is yours, all yours.

Fame has a fleeting breath,  
Hopes may be frail or fond;  
But Love shall be Love till death,  
And perhaps beyond.

You may even, if you wish to, call Mr. Austin Dobson a Minor Poet.

And finally, as you will see from the foregoing, the Minor Poet, unlike the Very Minor Poet, is modest—that is, reasonably modest. He is not, in print, the victim of an undue egocentricity.

We have reached at last the realm of the amateur, the not-worth-while, the egocentric: come heavenly Muse, for I would justify the works of the Very Minor Poet to an inappreciative public.

The amateur needs no justification; his commission is as that of Melchizedek,—he has been a law unto himself ever since he attained his first complete expression in Horace Walpole. The not-worth-while, however, at first seems to call for some comment. Why read very minor poetry, you ask, if it is not worth while? Dear friend, you are not always in the mood for that poetry which ranges from the very great to the minor. A good cigar should be smoked quietly with some reverence, and furthermore you have not always at hand a presentation copy; yet although no one this side of sanity will declare that it is worth while smoking cigarettes, many will aver that you may derive considerable entertainment from them. As for egocentricity, nothing is more interesting, even to its possessor. That it is a characteristic which the Very Minor Poet shares with great minds of all time will be admitted when it is considered how many of the latter were completely wrapped up in themselves: Napoleon, Byron, the aged Carlyle. The egocentricity of the Very Minor Poet, however, is distinguished from that of the cloud-wreathed by its fragrant, almost pungent fatuity—a last endearing trait. "Good God!" exclaimed Dean Swift, on a well-known occasion, "what a genius I had when I wrote that book!" Nearly every self-respecting Very Minor Poet has said precisely the same thing after each one of his books.

The three requirements of the Very Minor Poet which we have just discussed by no means take into account all of his qualities, but these demands already made are answered to, among contemporaries, with most distinction by Mr. Le Gallienne, despite the strong claims of the Laureate for first place. I have no desire to particularize, to give quotations from his verses that may justify the high claim I make for him; his works may be found, and read, in any railway station. There may, to be sure, be a reasonable doubt as to whether the title "poet" in any form may be applied to an individual so crassly



vulgar as Mr. Le Gallienne; but when once you have granted him a place among the Very Minor Poets his position there is incontestable. And he has made a bid for the suffrages of all lovers of the kind of poetry now under discussion so pressing that it cannot be ignored: he has translated Fitzgerald, whose version of the *Rubaiyat* we had always with vague discomfort felt was not Very Minor Poetry, into that delightful medium. To do this is so difficult and so thankless a task that the satisfaction of the periphrast must be correspondingly great; otherwise there is no justice under heaven. You will remember that when the elegant version which a learned divine had made of a simple, almost crude bit of English (S. John, xi:35) was read to Doctor Johnson, he ungratefully roared: "The d—d puppy!" The Doctor had limitations from which some of us today are happily free: there are a few who have learned to appreciate this kind of thing. I am credibly informed that since Mr. Le Gallienne has written this new version of Fitzgerald, his colleagues have proclaimed him Theanthropos of Vigo street.

Happy is England, for she is rapidly changing from a nation of shopkeepers to a nation of Very Minor Poets. To be convinced you have only to read the catalogue of Mr. John Lane. You will find there names as interesting and as worthy of remembrance as those in Homer's catalogue of ships: Rosamund Marriott Watson, Le Gallienne, Winifred Lucas, F. Money-Coutts, Dollie Radford, R. Garnett, C. W. Dalmon, Olive Custance, Norman Gale, Mary Brotherton, Richard K. Leather, and many more too long. We in America, victims of a younger civilization, can hardly hope to equal this.

We in America, nevertheless, have at least one Very Minor Poet of the very highest distinction. He has been writing since 1866 (even, perhaps, since an earlier date), for I find on the fly-leaf of his book a record of the following copyrights: 1866, 1869, 1872, 1879, 1883, 1885, and 1894; the volume of his collected poems is now in its third edition, and contains, "to date," he says (you see, he promises to write still more), "all the poems of mine that I wish to have live." And yet to how many — so slow are those in a prophet's own country, except in England, to do him honour—to how many does the name Henry Abbey mean anything? Surely this ought not so to be. To me it means a very great deal indeed.

I should like to analyse his poetry, to tell what constitutes its singular charm, but the task is one of much difficulty; besides, Matthew Arnold, in *The Study of Poetry*, cautions the critic against so doing. "Critics," he exclaims, "give themselves great labour to draw out what in the abstract constitutes the characters of a high quality of poetry. It is

much better simply to have recourse to concrete examples—to take specimens of poetry of the high, the very highest quality, and to say: 'The characters of a high quality of poetry are what is expressed *there*.'" Now, when in any definition of very minor poetry I named three distinguishing traits, I frankly acknowledged that these by no means comprised all the peculiarities of that poetry. To complete the definition, however, now becomes easy, for I may point to the poems of Mr. Abbey and declare that all the characters of the very highest quality of very minor poetry are there.

First, listen to Mr. Abbey when he strikes the lyric note so persistently twanged by the late Thomas Haynes Bayly. It is from his poem,

#### THE FISHER MAIDENS.

##### NORMANDY.

We are two fisher-maidens, and we dwell beside  
the sea,  
Where the surf is ever rolling, where the winds are  
blowing free;  
And we loved a youth, the bravest that had ever  
drawn the seine,  
And for comeliness and honour he was fit to wed a  
queen.

We loved him, and we hated one another for his  
love  
That he never showed for either. Could he toss it  
like a glove?  
But one day the sails were hoisted, and he left the  
loving shore,  
And we saw him in the beauty and the pride of life  
no more.

For the tempest broke upon him as at night he ven-  
tured back:  
All the sea was frothy madness, all the sky was wild  
and black;  
But we combed the drifted sea-weed from the sable  
of his hair,  
And the day that he was buried seemed too much  
for us to bear.

In the last stanza they effect a reconciliation.  
Again, take single stanzas and fragments from any  
poem at random:

"So, lost on love's measureless prairie,  
The beautiful Indian girl  
Looked round on the helpless horizon,  
Her thoughts in a turbulent whirl;  
And beholding no path nor assistance,  
Hopeless and deeply depressed,  
She plucked at the words of her loved one  
And treasured a few in her breast."

And these, from "The City of Decay":

"Having given his name he briefly  
 Sketched their early, tender meeting."

"So with soothing hand came kindness  
 And reposed it on his shoulders;  
 But he dazedly, as with blindness,  
 Pressed his palm upon his brow."

"But that night the Graybeard's spirit  
 Anchored in the Indian Ocean,  
 Off Ceylon, in oystered waters."

And this, from the "Ballad of Consolation":

"Tho' pleased with your faith I was troubled  
 When your heart found naught of relief;  
 For always the Angels of heaven  
 Sympathize deeply with grief."

But Mr. Abbey's range is far more varied than I have space to show. Anything would be unsatisfactory short of the entire three hundred pages of his volume, so admirably printed by the Riverside Press. He has at times the simplicity of Wordsworth, the majesty of Longfellow, the sensuousness of Keats, the oriental splendour of Tom Moore. His versatility is astonishing: he has given us poems of nature, *vers de société*, patriotic odes, battle hymns, elegies, and epithalamies, philosophical and historical poems, ballads and pastorals, American Indian, East Indian, and Norman poems, as well as Arabian and Bedouin. Indeed, of all Very Minor Poets I have no hesitation in declaring Mr. Abbey the most versatile.

No account of Mr. Abbey's work, however, would even approach adequacy without some mention of his heroic blank verse. I pass over with regret that splendid poem "Irak," where the poet on his sure-footed Nedjedgee, seeking the princess Zayda, halts before the glittering minarets of Riad; where

"The hazy air lay on the grassy hills  
 Like gossamer, and thinner than the shawls  
 That merchants draw through ladies' finger-rings.  
 A listless camel cropped the verdure near."

I pass this over, for I have not yet spoken of his masterpiece, "The Giant Spider."

This is the tale of a brave adventurer, who

... "having heard  
 That in gray Caffa, or its ancient tombs,  
 A giant spider balked the snares of men,"

thither went and in the city dwelt. He chanced at sunset on a fisherman who once had gone into an ancient tomb and slept therein until at dawn he woke,

"And found that in thick cords he lay ensnared;  
 But reached his knife, and slowly cut them through.  
 Then, from the lighted outlet of the tomb,  
 A horror fled on sideways-working legs."

The aged fisherman the adventurer takes back from the city to a cottage small.

"Here dwelt my helper to the spidery news,"

the adventurer writes; and here too dwelt a maid who charmed him, daughter to the fisherman.

"Her broidered skirt drooped loosely to the knees;  
 The silken, Turkish trousers hung below,  
 Their fullness at the ankles gathered in;  
 But the red, toe-curved shoes betrayingly  
 Left her arched insteps naked as the moon."

This is about all of Part First. Part Second opens with a line which I defy any one to match in very minor poetry:

"An early knuckle smote against my door."

The Giant Spider has come like a thief in the night and carried off the maiden, whom the adventurer now realises he madly loves. The pursuit is one of the most thrilling in all blank verse. Following the trail which the ravisher had left,

"A glutinous rope, twisted with five strong strands,"

they reach a deserted tomb. The description which follows would delight the fastidious taste of even a Bulwer Lytton or a Disraeli:

"A target hung above and on it flashed  
 Trojan and Greek, adverse as right and wrong.  
 About lay cups of onyx set in gold.  
 On conic jars were bacchanalian scenes;  
 Nude, chubby bacchi, grotesque, leering fauns—  
 All linked beneath the cluster-laden vine;  
 And in the jars were rings and flowers of gold.  
 We found twin ear-drops, sapphire Gemini,  
 Metallic mirrors, and a statuette  
 Of amorous Dido naked to the waist.  
 All these we found, but nothing for defense.  
 A club had been of greater worth than these.  
 On desert sands a crust is more than gold,  
 In peril arms, and on the sea a plank."

After a heroic battle the Spider is slain, and the hero and heroine are united.

If, then, you ask me what are the characters of the highest Very Minor Poetry, I reply that they are what is so opulently expressed in the verses of Henry Abbey. I know of no other American Very Minor Poet who will so completely delight the connoisseur. Once, indeed, I owned a copy of the works of another genius of the rarest distinction, but I lost it a dozen years ago, and I have forgotten, alas, even the name of the poetess.

For the book was by a woman. Its title was *The Maple Dell*, and it was published, I think, by the Appletons (but of this I am not quite sure), in the early '80's. It was all about the wanderings of a woman whose husband had first taken to drink and then deserted her, and the author sold it from door

to door. Of the several thousand lines, I have forgotten all but two; but that it was Very Minor Poetry of the rarest quality I remember perfectly well. These two lines, tantalizing as a fragment of Sappho, I find in an old note book into which I copied them at the time,—they are the refrain of the wronged wife and mother:

“Give Delilah fits of mania!  
Ring the bells of Pennsylvania!”

And so I must confess to a passionate fondness for the Very Minor Poet: you may keep such a secret long locked up in your breast, but it is bound at last to declare itself. If, then, after cherishing this devotion for years, if after collecting the most remotely escaped “fugitive verses,” I may not stand and give reason for the enthusiasm that is in me, there is no efficacy in pen and ink. “If by dull rhymes our English must be chain’d,” my only plea is that those few of us who are sufficiently unselfish to collect them may be allowed to enjoy them unquestioned. And if, finally, the late Bill Nye could say of the music of so great a genius as Wagner, that it is not really half so bad as it sounds, I may surely be permitted to declare the same of the song of the Very Minor Poet.

PIERRE LA ROSE.

## HARVEST

**A** LONG the furrowed pathway of the sea,  
I sowed a crop of sand:  
Lo! what a golden gathering there shall  
be

When Harvest opes her hand!

What my reward when reaping-time had come?—  
Only an empty store of wild sea foam!

Along the azure pathway of the sky  
My heart-wrung tears I shed,  
And cried: “There will fall star-gems by-and-by—  
An harvest from o’erhead!”  
What drenched the dreary earth and barren plain?—  
My salty tears that fell in driving rain.

Along the fragrant pathway of the Spring  
Sweet roses did I strew;  
With hopeful eye a happy garnering  
In harvest time I knew.  
What did I gain whereat my soul yet grieves?—  
A meagre pile of pale and mouldy leaves.

Fate! ruler of Grief’s harvesting, Despair—  
Fate, we have deified—  
Tears evanescent, blighted leaves and bare,  
Foam or the fleeting tide,  
These to thine altar,—thine own choice—I bring:  
With satiate wrath accept my offering!

KATHLEEN HOY DU FREEN.

## REVIEWS

### LOUIS XV AND HIS COURT

FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XV.—By *James Breck Perkins*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 2 Vols.

**M**R. JAMES BRECK PERKINS has written a book that will offend the specialist and delight the general reader. The present school of American historians, being scholars and not litterateurs, dig out historical ore and leave their readers to do the smelting. As a result they have almost succeeded in divorcing history from literature altogether, and if present methods prevail, the future critic will as soon think of speaking of the literary quality of their work as of applying stylistic canons to the monograph of a government entomologist. That day, however, has not yet come. Moreover, in the historical camp itself there has been recently an evidence of humanistic reaction. A couple of years ago the *American Historical Review* declared its intention of regarding the literary merit as well as the scientific value of its contributions, and last fall Professor Woodrow Wilson published a *Life of Washington*, which bore distinct traces of literary exertions. Unfortunately, the *Review* soon sank to the level of a trade journal, which a man of literary taste would as soon think of reading as of perusing the *Kerosene Monthly*. The Professor worked very hard at the sublime vein, and went so far as to employ the expression “’tis,” on almost every page; and still he failed of effect. We Philistines all preferred to read Mr. Ford’s frivolous, gossiping book on Washington, published at the same time. Now the reaction has probably spent its force, and henceforth we shall have the rough-hewn historical monograph. The inarticulate specialist will resume his sway. Mr. Perkins, however, does not belong to the pig-iron school of historians; nor, on the other hand, does he seek literary effects by heavy Miltonian ornamentation. He is a simple, easy, natural narrator, never especially profound or original, but always entertaining, impersonal, and direct. He can put you in possession of facts in a rapid, pleasant way. He makes little attempt to put you in possession of philosophy. There are some profane people, however, who will think that both facts and philosophy can as well be gathered from him as from the pig-iron books. To these it is merely necessary to say one word. That word is *Stubbs*. An American teacher once dared to tell his class, “Not every one that saith unto me Stubbs, Stubbs, shall enter into the kingdom of history.” But that man had a courage far beyond his age and calling, and, according to the rumor, he was torn limb from limb at the next meeting of the historical society.



It will appear from this that Mr. Perkins is a popularizer. No preparation whatever is required for understanding him. He takes you at once into Louis XV's court, introduces you to the many sinners and the few saints, shows where the money came from and where it went, who took bribes and who did not. He gossips, quotes epigrams, sums up a system of philosophy, outlines a foreign policy or campaign in the same compact, perspicuous way. Perhaps you hear a little too much of the mouldy fiddle-faddle of the French court, but you forgive him because of the realistic effect. He has his limitations, and he knows them. In period-defining, *Zeit-geist* reflection, and Teutonic analysis, he is not at home. But you catch a glimpse of the Pompadour in the council-chamber, of Quesnay, the French Socrates, laying down the law in the *entresol*, and of the royal rake conducting his backyard liaisons; you make the acquaintance of lawyers, bishops, peasants, and you lay down his book with distinct impressions that your mind is likely to retain. In this range of concrete things and actual personalities he is admirable—better than that, he is amusing. But this must be remembered: He is never pedagogical. That the specialists will pick him up in some points is certain. For one thing, he says some incautious things about the Mercantilists. He will be made to suffer for that. But the question suggests itself: If it takes nine tailors to make a man, how many specialists go to make a historian? In this day none but a polyhedral genius can hope to write a perfectly accurate work on general history.

### JAPAN AND ITS ART

AN ARTIST'S LETTERS FROM JAPAN — By John La Farge. 8vo. Illustrated. The Century Co. \$4.00.

THESE letters by Mr. La Farge are no novelty. His visit to Japan was made in '86, and the matter now gathered into a beautiful volume has already appeared at various times in *The Century Magazine*. Indeed it is upon this series and upon the *Considerations on Painting* that Mr. La Farge's position as an art critic rests.

The position is undeniable, and it has in the minds of the critics, and of the public as well, lent a distinction to his work in painting and stained glass, just as in the beginning this work gained a hearing for him as a critic.

But Mr. La Farge could stand merely as a writer, with no help from his pictures. The pictures have, however, or his ability to paint them has, fitted him to write of Japan from a distinctly individual point of view. His *Letters* are not an ordinary book of travels. His subject is primarily Japan in relation to its own art, and more broadly in relation to modern art, especially the decorative branches.

His interest is in nature rather than in people, and in art rather than in nature. "The human beings are not the novelty," he says, "not even the Japanese; what is absorbingly new is the light, its whiteness, its silvery milkiness." Here the painter speaks, and indeed the book is full of the most acute and sensitive descriptive writing. But through all this glittering richness of style the reader is surely led to listen to the theorist, the critic.

Description and criticism are everywhere intermingled, and Mr. La Farge is always suggestive. His culture is broad enough to prevent his ever falling into the narrowness of the artist who knows only his art or into the obscurity of the technician.

His knowledge of Japanese history and philosophy is perhaps not profound, but, at least, it is not inaccurate, and the fragments scattered through his pages are delightful reading.

In many matters, of course, Mr. La Farge gives something more than an impressionistic rendering—on architectural topics his study is minute and careful. The chapters on the temples at Nikko are crowded with detailed information. On the purely æsthetic side the effect is curious and suggestive. Mr. La Farge has here expended most lavishly the richness of his style. Page after page he makes into a kind of carved and gilded fretwork, a confused and brilliant obscurity from which the reader gains most forcibly one impression, that of color. The author himself recognizes this. "I fear," he observes, "that of all my description the refrain of the words gold and bronze will be all that you will retain." "Red and gold" would more nearly represent our resultant impression. We may be insisting on an over-refinement, but this quality in the writing of a painter who is, above all, known as a colorist has been to us curiously interesting. Japan has never worn brighter garments than in this book.

The application of Japanese lessons to the insistent questions of our own decorative art, now so ardently pursued, is a valuable part of the volume. Subtleties are rarely made forcible enough to seem of practical as well as theoretical interest. This Mr. La Farge does. The Japanese decorator manufactures his product; the European or American makes a design from which some one else manufactures; the artist and his material are held apart. Such is one of Mr. La Farge's more obvious *dicta*, yet the point has never been made often enough to really convince our artisans. Mr. La Farge is delicately sensitive, but he is not fantastic. There is, throughout, a straightforward appeal to facts and a certain dignity of style which make the volume more convincing than much of the wild writing done now-a-days about Japan.

The illustrations, in losing their color in the reproduction, have lost their greatest charm, and only serve to accentuate one's belief that in that element is to be found the greatest merit of Mr. La Farge's painting.

## THE WONDROUS ISLES

THE WATER OF THE WONDROUS ISLES.—By William Morris. 8vo. Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.50.

“THE descriptive and decorative beauties of this romance . . . are excellent above all in this, that numberless though they be they are always just and fit. Not a tone of color, not a note of form, is misplaced or dispensable. The pictures are clear and chaste, sweet and lucid as early Italian work. There crowds and processions, battle-pieces and merry-makings worthy of Benozzo or Carpaccio, single figures, or groups of lovers in flowery, watery land, worthy of Sandro or Filippo. The sea-pieces are like the younger Lippi's, the best possible to paint from shore. They do not taste salt or sound wide, but they have all the beauty of the beach.”—Mr. Swinburne's comment on the verse in *The Life and Death of Jason* is no less felicitous when quoted of the prose in *The Water of the Wondrous Isles*. The tale is a panorama with all the pictorial qualities which distinguish William Morris's literary work, and no better comparison could be made than that with the earlier Italian masters. Indeed, before this opinion of Mr. Swinburne's came to mind, the similarity of the writing here to M. Boutet de Monvel's pictures in the *Joan of Arc*, so far as sentiment is concerned, was on the point of the pen—there is the *naïveté* of the Renaissance which makes Rossetti's sonnet on the *Giorgione Pastoral* in the Louvre, with its phrase “sad with the whole of pleasure,” and its seizure of that precise moment “while the shadowed grass is cool against her naked side,” irresistibly suggestive of Birdalone, this newest heroine of the Morris romance.

Lovers of Morris's stories will find in the first sorceress, she who stole Birdalone from her mother, a suggestion of his Medea, heightened not a little in his characterization of the second sorceress, her sister. They will find another classic figure in Habundia, archamadryad and foster-mother to Birdalone. These three stand for the feeling of old Greece:

“But not alone the skies of Greece were thronged  
With deities, for river, grove, and fount  
Were peopled with a vague, ethereal folk”—

though the pageantry is far more evident in the simplicity of feeling and frank sensuousness of the book than in these three. For, while Habundia holds her classical qualities to the last, her subject-sprites are rather those of the *Erl König* than of the Woodland nymph; and the sorceresses, Medean enough in one aspect, are witch-wives, devotees of Loki in another. And this intermingling of the South and the North is made more plain by the depth of purpose and serenity of passion, a passion equally chaste and intense, which underlie the

delights of the passing hour. The story has the paganism of Greece and Rome for its warp, and the heathenry of the Jutes and Angles for its woof; and it is further embroidered and embellished with scenes of chivalry and mediæval Christianity—no artist-hand less sure than Morris's could have blended such materials into such a whole, leaving a composite picture which must be viewed in its original coloring in the book itself to be enjoyed—or even imagined.

It will be seen that nearly all of the sources whence were derived *The Life and Death of Jason*, *The Fall of Niblungs*, and *The Earthly Paradise* are here laid upon contribution. It stands midway between the ante-Christianity of *The Story of the Glittering Plain* and the post-Christianity of *News from Nowhere*, and it is like the last in being free from lyrical embellishments, no line of verse interrupting or bearing on the sufficiently rhythmical flow of the narrative. It is only less long in the telling than *The Well at the World's End*, to the general plan of which it bears closest resemblance. But in point of language *The Water of the Wondrous Isles* stands quite alone, the quaint, archaically idiomatic English of the other romances here becoming more involved, more archaic, and more impacted with Saxon derivatives. There seems in this no especial effort to fit sound to sense—no conscious use of language to express a new combination of ideas—and it may be conjectured that the growing involution and old-fashionedness of diction is primarily due to the writer's perfecting himself in his chosen mode of expression through continued practice. It is to be noted as certainly true, notwithstanding, that this manner of speech is a most befitting choice for the depiction of a time when the ideas of the world of Odin or Thor, of the Jupiter and Apollo of the Renaissance, and of the churchly Christianity of the Middle Ages were all seeking together in that delectable land “east of the sun and west of the moon,” where the scenes of the Morris romance are always laid. And we can imagine no land, even were the November days not upon us, where we would rather be.

## DRUMMOND AND WATER

IF I WERE GOD.—By Richard Le Gallienne. T. Y. Crowell & Co. \$0.50.

THIS pamphlet, we are told by the publishers, “is said to have been the outcome of a visit paid by Mr. Le Gallienne last summer to Davos Platz, where he had frequent talks on similar subjects with Mr. and Mrs. Price Hughes and Sister Lily, of the West London Mission.” We suspected as much. The title alone smacks of the popular Congregationalist preacher, hesitating before the last descent into “bicycle” sermons and “church smokers,” willing to temporise

with a final strain after serious indecency. And we all remember that Paley said he knew nothing against some one *but* that he was a popular preacher. Drummond was a sufficiently severe imposition in his own qualities; but Drummond bespattered with that sickly grace of expression affected by Mr. Le Gallienne is intolerable. If we must have platitudes, let them at least be free from molasses; give us the purple face, the triumphant tenor voice, the convincing fist on the pulpit; anything but platitudes and Le Gallienne, banality and anæmia. That combination is too much for the hardest church-goer. The text of Mr. Le Gallienne's tract is the difficulty of reconciling "the facts of the world" with "the possibility of a good God"; and his sermon in point of sustained and unconscious commonplace is worthy of many a newly-fledged curate. Only in the uncanny flabbiness of his sentiment does he fall short of the youngest of young divines. Yet the publishers tell us that "the work is in line with the moods of many minds, and arouses melancholy but mysteriously deep thoughts." We dispute the statement as a violent slander on the human race. A boy of fifteen, with a constitution ruined by too much household poetry, may find in it a beautiful answer to his spiritual yearnings—nobody else will. And as for "the melancholy but mysteriously deep thoughts," no one who reads Mr. Le Gallienne can be other than melancholy. For the rest, his discourse merely arouses a pitiful astonishment. It is surprising, though quite characteristic, that a literary man who has passed his boyhood should be knocked off his feet by contact with a few simple, eternal facts; and it is distressing that he should describe the trite sensations of his collapse with a most naïf delight in the crude workings of his emotions. The result is a horrible example of the ignorance and helplessness of the man who is merely literary. In its personal aspect we may, no doubt, consider it as a contribution to the credit side of Mr. Le Gallienne's private moral account, as an offset to *The Quest of the Golden Girl*.

#### ITALY UP-TO-DATE

THE ITALIANS OF TO-DAY.—By René Bazin.  
Translated from the French by William Marchant.  
12mo. Henry Holt & Co. \$1.25.

**T**HOUGH the author of this book is a Frenchman, the "personal note" is sounded as lightly as may be; his position, his training, his interests we must gather for ourselves. His personal experiences, his traveling companionships, his emotions by the way—all these things are mercifully minimized; and we fall back pretty completely upon our own impressions and intuitions when we pronounce him to be a gentleman proprietor, with a decided taste for building and agriculture; a man of liberal, even technical, education, with a positive mind very evenly devel-

oped and very well balanced; a man, too, of some military experience, or, at least, military training, and in easy command of the better sort of social opportunities, abroad as well as at home.

Such a man, of course, will not produce the conventional book on Italy. His Italians will be the actual creatures of the last decade of the century, and their country will be drawn out of the dim haze of romance into the common air of to-day—thick, dusty, noisy, even, with "problems." Michael Angelo, promptly and briefly referred to on page 14, does not appear again; instead, we have Mascagni, Fogazzaro, Ada Negri, Margherita, and so on—generally at first hand. The Roman pontiffs and the Florentine painters are completely set aside; instead, we talk on trains with our fellow-travelers about the social, political, financial, and agricultural questions of the day. We have an exhaustive account of the great building speculation that ruined so many of the Roman princes; and other of these princes we accompany to their estates in the Campagna, viewing their buffalo herds and studying the housing of their farm hands. At Naples we are led by the chief of one of the labor associations into the quarter where new streets are being driven through old slums, visiting a few of the slums themselves, and receiving a vivid idea of the general dislocation of the life of the lower orders consequent upon this *risanimento*. In Sicily we "do" a bergamot grove, where we learn the processes, the profits, and the conditions that rule the labor world. Everywhere facts, everywhere figures, everywhere the people—high, middle-class, low—speaking for themselves; and everywhere the author, a kind of umpire, balancing things with a fine, free hand, and preserving (except for his long essay on the Roman Campagna) a good sense of proportion. He is bright, rapid, vivid, tripping; does not completely forget the churches; does not altogether slight the landscape; says a good word now and then for current literature; transcribes some of the amorous personals that illumine the newspapers, as well as sets down the procedure of the Neapolitan police courts; does justice to the swarms of amateur poets, as well as visits barracks where he engages in gingerly discussions with the officers on the attitude of Italy toward France, and on the probable future of the triple alliance; quotes Buffalo Bill approvingly on the Italian cattle-punchers and rough riders of the *Agro Romano*; gives a detailed account of the performance of *I Rantzau* at the Pergola, in Florence; and summarizes a number of typical speeches made by the politicians of the peninsula before their different electorates during a hot campaign. Altogether, a thoroughly interesting book by an alert, qualified observer—one of broad mind and extensive interests and sympathies.

The translation is good—at least, it bears little or no evidence of being a translation. There is a full index.



## MINIATURE PAINTERS

PORTRAIT MINIATURES FROM THE TIME OF HOLBEIN, 1531, TO THAT OF SIR WILLIAM ROSS, 1860.—By George C. Williamson. 8vo. London, George Bell & Sons; New York, The Macmillan Co. \$4.00.

THE subtitle of Mr. Williamson's volume defines very accurately the scope and the limitations of the book. It is a "Handbook for Collectors." It makes no attempt to be a standard for final reference, nor, indeed, is it intended to amuse any one who shall try to read it straight through. The necessity for giving the collector some account of almost every painter and some hints as to the quality of his work has forced the exclusion of gossip and romance. If Mr. Williamson were master of a style somewhat less dilute he could have avoided this omission and still have kept the bulk of his volume within limits. But it is, perhaps, unfair to demand concise English along with great industry and some taste, and Mr. Williamson has accomplished so well what he set himself to do that it is not just to blame him for not having done more—though to the casual reader his volume would have been made more interesting thereby.

He very likely felt that several hundred admirable reproductions would explain to any one the charm of his subject. The miniatures lose surprisingly little with the loss of color, and are numerous enough to enable the reader to form his own impressions of the style of all the more important artists. For the collector who cannot afford to own Dr. Propert's standard work on the subject they will be invaluable in verifying and comparing his own acquisitions.

There is a chapter on foreign miniaturists, on enamel painters (with some good examples of Isabey), on the care of miniatures, and on notable collections. It is surprising what a fragile thing a collection is, and it is even more surprising how unauthentic it is likely to be. It was said once of a very noted Cosway collection that what it most needed was a genuine Cosway. Forgeries, according to Mr. Williamson, grow more clever and more frequent each year.

It is surprising how common miniature portraiture has been. We rely upon it very largely for our knowledge of the personal appearance of historical characters. But this reliance is responsible for some wide-spread popular errors. For example, according to a story of Horace Walpole's, Crosse, having instructions from the Marquis of Hamilton to repair a damaged miniature of Mary Queen of Scots, entirely altered it as a portrait by substituting for the long oval features of the unhappy queen a round face which was his idea of female beauty. This is the well-known portrait of the queen so widely copied and the source of so many inaccurate pictures.

Mr. Williamson devotes the greater part of the book to tracing the development of the art in England.

He is not always quite successful in making clear changes in style and spirit from one generation to another, but he has a good sense of proportion, and the reader comes from the volume with a clear impression of the most important painters: Holbein, the Hilliards, the Olivers, Cooper, Cosway and the Plimers in the eighteenth century, and Robertson in the nineteenth. It is unfortunate that Mr. Williamson could not devote more space to the recent revival of interest in miniatures, of which the prices obtained for her work by Miss Amelia Küssner are the most sensational feature.

## A LAWYER

CELEBRATED TRIALS.—By Henry Lauren Clinton. 8vo. Illustrated. Harper & Bros. \$2.50.

PEOPLE who read books—who have to read books for their sins—have borne patiently with the "pushfulness" of the autobiographer, but there is a limit to patience. This gentleman has pressed it, for his *Celebrated Trials* can only be described as "cheeky." He seems to have been a fairly successful practitioner at the New York bar, whose good fortune it was to be associated in the trial of a number of important criminal cases at one of those periods in the criminal politics of New York City when the decent elements of society rise and inflict a sort of legalized lynch law on their oppressors. A fair account of the Tweed and Hall trials, and especially of the Croker trial, from such sources as might be commanded even by a junior counsel, would not be uninteresting. But Mr. Clinton has no such purpose in view. He has written the book to gratify his own silly egotism, and where we look for the facts of two or three great legal and political battles, we find newspaper reporters' puffs of the author and verbatim reports of the commonplace speeches of a commonplace lawyer to a commonplace jury. Nor is this Mr. Clinton's worst fault. Not content with printing other people's puffs, he puffs himself most enthusiastically. He says that Tweed, "supposing as a matter of course that Messrs. Tremain & Peckham (Lyman Tremain and Wheeler H. Peckham) would impanel the jury, hurried back for his second trial." His disappointment was keen when he learned that Mr. Clinton, "thinking that he might prevent a lamentable failure of justice and thus render the public a great service, had accepted a retainer from the Attorney General." This is only one instance of the absurd egotism of the man. It leads him to the most unfair attacks on his associates, even on such a giant of the bar as Charles O'Connor, and causes him to go so far as to denounce decisions of the Supreme Court that were unfavorable to him.

In point of immediate interest the murder trial of Richard Croker is the most important case in the book, and Mr. Clinton passes over the details of the

shooting to print his own absurd speech for the defense. A review of the testimony may be of some value at this moment. In the election of 1874 Abram S. Hewitt, the well-known democratic politician, who was afterward mayor of New York, was a candidate for Congress in the Tenth Congressional district on the Tammany ticket. His opponent was James O'Brien, a factional leader. Early in the day the "O'Brienites" began to "raid" the Tammany booths, and Croker—then a coroner—who was known to be a man of brutal courage, was sent into the district to meet force with force. At a polling booth he encountered O'Brien. They were old enemies, and they greeted each other with the foul language of the slums. It is not clear whether O'Brien or Croker struck the first blow, but in a moment they were vigorously engaged, and Croker was mauling his antagonist without mercy. While the battle was in progress an unfortunate man named McKenna took a hand in it. According to the evidence of two witnesses, Croker turned from O'Brien, and, drawing a revolver from his pocket, shot McKenna dead. He then passed the pistol to a confederate and gave himself in charge of the police. This evidence was strongly contradicted at the trial, Croker protesting that he never carried a pistol; but it seems to have made an impression on a part of the jury, since, in spite of the efforts of the lawyers for the defense, the trial ended in a disagreement. Croker became a Tammany head, and subsequently the district attorney abandoned the prosecution.

The reader will not learn these details from Mr. Clinton. He will only learn that Mr. Clinton delivered a "moving appeal" to the jury, concluding with this sublime sentiment: "Gentlemen, only the defendant is wanting to complete the family group. The loving wife, the young mother, the infant son await the coming of Richard Croker. The lesson taught by your verdict will sink deep in the public mind. Let it be known and read of all men, let it be everywhere understood, that, come what may, a New York jury dare, and under all circumstances, *will*, do their duty."

There are about 300 pages of this sort of silliness in the book.

### POTTERS AND POTTERY

POTTERS; THEIR ARTS AND CRAFTS.—By John C. L. Sparkes and Walter Gandy. 12mo. Thomas Whittaker. Illustrated. \$1.25.

CARLYLE'S scornful nick-name for historians, "Dry-as-dust," is still more applicable to most of the writers who have discussed china and pottery. Yet, in a way, there is no more fascinating subject, nor one more interwoven with history and human interest. It appeals to every woman's heart and to many a man's, if he dare but acknowledge it. "I have an almost

feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see a great house I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture gallery," wrote Charles Lamb.

Mr. John C. L. Sparkes, of the South Kensington Museum, and Mr. Walter Gandy have collaborated in this volume to produce a work which, while taking nothing of a technical nature for granted, is yet so full of side references and general information as to be exceedingly readable throughout. "Whatever there is of interest to us in the piece of work the workman put there, the work has become the permanent expression of the worker's skill and taste—the material comparatively nothing; the art almost everything." And so between receipts for glazes are written anecdotes of the potters and of the kings and princes who befriended them. The chapter on processes is so simply and clearly written that the reader feels almost able to "throw" and "glaze" and "fire" without further instruction. Ancient pottery appeals perhaps to a more limited class, but is here invested with an interest quite unusual. Mediæval pottery, as produced in the various European countries, is described with many quaint quotations from cups and plates:

"Be mery and wise."

"Drink faire—do n't sware."

The chapter on China and Japan, and the various imitations of their products in Holland and England, is comprehensive, and yet, in a small space, covers all the ground. "The absurd phrase of *living up to one's teapot*—one of the literary missiles that were aimed some few years ago at the *Æsthetic* movement—was not so absurd after all. It would be a good thing for our native arts if our designers would live up to the standard of good Japanese work, and look at Nature for themselves."

It is rather strange among the moderns to find no mention of Rookwood nor even of Dedham, though there is a statement that Chinese *sang de bœuf* has never been successfully imitated, thus ignoring Hugh Robertson's heroic efforts and more than successful achievements in this direction. The references to American work are in fact confined to a short appendix of four pages.

Mr. Sparkes, who writes the preface, apologizes unnecessarily for adding another volume to the long list already published on this subject.



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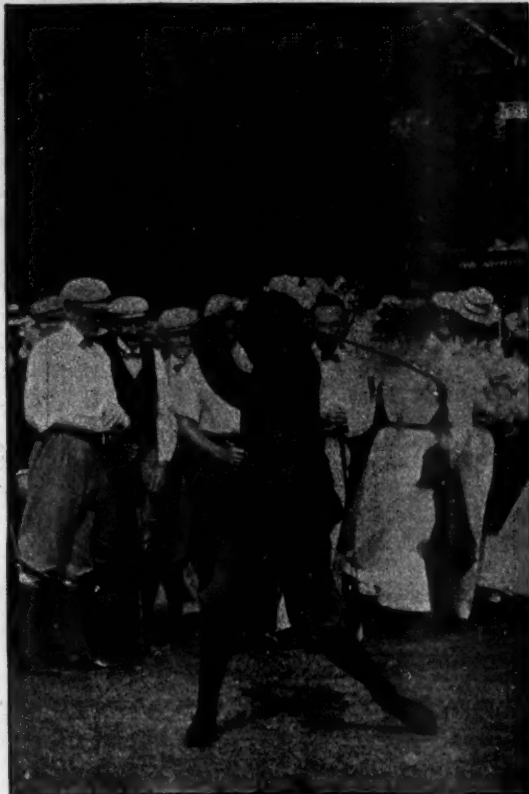
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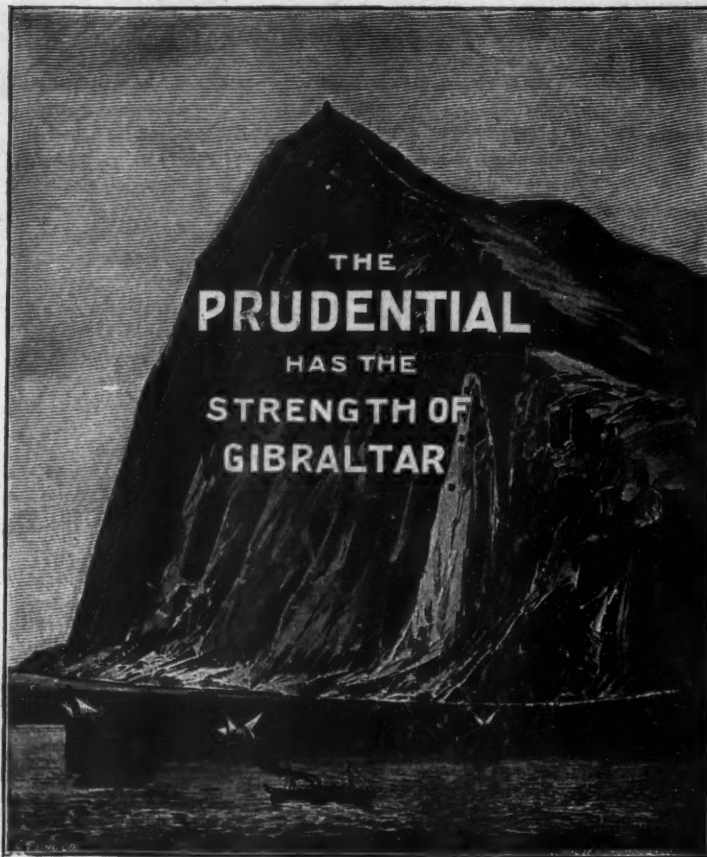
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**THE FREEDOM OF THE FIELDS.**—By *Charles C. Abbott*. J. B. Lippincott & Co. \$1.50.

TO the five books now in hand praise must be about equally distributed. Mr. Van Dyke's angling sketches are the special charm of his book, and we like his way of sandwiching little streaks of scholarly allusion between his observations on natural history and his moral reflections. He is downright enthusiastic, which goes a long way toward baffling the professional fault-finder; moreover, he is a true poet, and sings like a veery when the fit comes on.

Mr. Skinner's feet are not winged; they are content to tread mother earth and feel the clay under them. But Mr. Skinner has an eye like a sparrowhawk's, and what escapes his vision is not worth seeing. Indeed, he sees rather too much at times for the good of his literature. In the present book, however, he is at his best, and we especially like his essay on "Night Prowls in the Streets." In his "Satisfaction With the Country" he is thoroughly interesting, indulging his imagination very little, and working his excellent common sense to fine effect. His style is pleasing, even distinguished, on account of its exceeding unpretentiousness and straightforward energy. In his paper, "Partly Practical," for example, he chats delightfully about how to travel cheaply in Europe. "Humbugs of Science" is another chapter in which Mr. Skinner makes us open our eyes. He deems the whole system of nomenclature in science an affront to good taste, and he insists that our books shall be cleared of them to give place to such beautiful names as "hog weed," "goat-wort," "jimson," and the like. But he makes it interesting.

The title of Mr. Parkhurst's book is misleading, if not wholly out of keeping with the contents. "Song-Birds and Water-fowl" would lead one to expect more and less than Mr. Parkhurst has given.

What connection such birds as turkey buzzards, woodpeckers, hawks, eagles, crows, and barn swallows can have with either song-birds or water-fowls is not readily seen. But we can say nothing worse than this against Mr. Parkhurst's beautiful volume. The gift of successful statement is finely exhibited on almost every page, and subjects pretty well worn are somehow given a new lease of interest. There was little room for originality in substance, and very small margin for even notable cleverness of treatment, and yet these pages fairly breathe freshness. Mr. Parkhurst has his wail, as loud as Mr. Skinner's, against the inadequacies of "scientific" language; moreover, he would make a new classification of birds, based not upon kinship, but upon habitat. Good luck to him; but he will fail. The book is beautifully illustrated with eighteen bird-pictures by Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertes. If it were colored to the life, the meadow lark facing page 276 would be all but a perfect portrait.

Mr. Abbott's "Travels in a Tree-Top" has already made its way to public favor; his "Freedom of the Fields" will possibly widen his audience. We should imagine, however, that his essay on "Company and Solitude" would not especially please the friends whom and with whom he is in the habit of dining. Birds and grasshoppers are doubtless very interesting; but most people do not care to have them forced upon their consideration, to the utter exclusion of everything else in life. Mr. Abbott is almost bitter in his condemnation of talk about the weather, one's health, and the like; but a large part of his own talk—and charming talk it is—runs upon, or ticklishly near, those very topics. Indeed, if a writer leaves out the weather when he hopes to do the natural thing, he is pretty sure to find himself left out of the best popular reckoning. That Mr. Abbott is not so left out is largely due to his delightful habit of practicing utter contempt of his own rule. We have read no better books than his, in as far as they may be taken to be perfectly honest reporting. He spares no pains to get details, and if these details are too frequently tiresomely minute, even trifling, they are correct. Some of the sketches included in this volume are not strictly in the vein of out-door observation habitual to Mr. Abbott; but they are all well loaded with his characteristic touches of genial humor and sincerity of coloring. The publishers have done their part in making these books attractive; each volume has four good illustrations, and the printing is excellent. In a word, the "Freedom of the Fields" is a book which shows a very pleasant writer in a happy mood.

Probably there cannot be too many books of the sort first cast before an unappreciative public by Thoreau; but we somehow have caught the impression that a minor vein of "out-doors literature" is in the way of being overworked. Not that the work itself is bad, but it seems so easy to do that it is scarcely worth while.



## MUSIC FOR CHILDREN

THE STEVENSON SONG BOOK — *With Music by various Composers.* 4to. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

SINGING VERSES FOR CHILDREN. — *The Words by Lydia Avery Coonley. Pictures by Alice Kellogg Tyler. Music by Eleanor Smith, Jessie L. Gaynor, Frederick W. Root, and Frank Atkinson, Jr.* 4to. The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

IT is always a question just what the expression "children's songs" signifies. It may mean music of a very simple character, with words of equal simplicity—Mother Goose, for instance; or it may be a musical setting of verses about children, intricate as to harmony, and obviously beyond the youthful understanding and enjoyment, either active or passive. Then there is a third class, in which the child-verses are nevertheless literature, and the music, while it is thoroughly good music, is not entirely out of reach of those for whom it is intended.

Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verse* has naturally supplied most of the material for the last class. Miss Eleanor Smith published a collection of eight of the songs several years ago, which are justifiably popular, as they are both easy and musicianly, and Mr. Ethelbert Nevin's setting of "In winter I get up at night," is almost a classic.

The most ambitious attempt to supply music for the "Child's Garden" is the *Stevenson Song Book* just published, similar in form to the *Field-DeKoven Song Book* of last year. It contains twenty of the best known poems and the excellent intention of the publishers is clearly shown in the preface, which states that "all the verses were selected for the predominance in them of the lyric quality. It was felt that the musical settings to be given to them should be melodious, simple, and well marked in rhythm, in order that the music should be in perfect harmony with the spirit and form of the poems." So it is probably not their fault that about half of the music in the book lacks just these qualities. Nine of the songs are by Dr. Villiers Stanford, two each by Mr. Chadwick, Mr. DeKoven, Mr. Gilchrist, Mr. Homer Bartlett, Mr. Foote, and one by Mr. C. B. Hawley. Just why Dr. Stanford should have such a large proportion is not clear, especially as the book is an American publication. His music is always scholarly and never cheap, but it must be confessed that it is sometimes dull. The machinery is too plainly in sight. And some of his songs in this collection have the same faults, though his best ones surpass anything else in the book, especially "Foreign Children," and "Bed in Summer."

The other composers, with two exceptions, have done excellent work and caught the right spirit. Mr. DeKoven is one of the exceptions, which is not surprising, and Mr. Chadwick, strange to say, is the other.

If it were not for these songs, which, through their commonplaceness, do not rise to the level of the verses, and some of Dr. Stanford's, in which the idea of the poetry is submerged beneath the involved composition, the book would have nothing to prevent its being an admirable collection of children's songs. And in a consideration of the whole, even these details are not aggressive.

The second book is a Chicago collaboration that is rather remarkable. In the first place, Mrs. Coonley's verses are natural and without affected youthfulness. Then the decorations and illustrations are very much ahead of anything recent in this direction, both in originality and technical skill. The drawing is full of life and the color always charming. Occasionally there is an illustration below the general standard, but the others more than compensate. Especially ingenious is the use of appropriate designs around the music. Mrs. Tyler's work in this book would almost seem to justify her entering the class of Charles Robinson and Boutet de Monvel.

Although the cover reads, "Music by Frederick W. Root (and others)," the others have done better work than Mr. Root. Miss Eleanor Smith has an equal number of songs uniform in their novelty of conception and graceful beauty. Mr. Atkinson's three are well written and attractive, and Mrs. Gaynor's, though at times a trifle "common," are still very consistent. On the other hand, only half of Mr. Root's songs are by any means equal to the average of the rest, the other three being rather below.

His "Flag Song," and "Christmas Song," however, are musical, and well within the possibility of youthful interpretation. In this respect the whole collection is superior to the *Stevenson Song Book*, as all the songs have this quality to no small degree. And when the additional charm of Mrs. Tyler's pictures is considered, it must be conceded that in spite of the greater inspiration of the Stevenson book, the other is a more complete artistic achievement.

## REAL BOYS IN SILVER VERSE

RED APPLE AND SILVER BELLS. — *By Hamish Hendry. Illustrated by Alice B. Woodward.* 12mo. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.00.

SUCH verse as Mr. Hamish Hendry gives to the world in this well-designed book was impossible in English a few years ago. Those were the days when *Mother Goose* set the standard for children's "poems," varied by

"Sure never yet was antelope  
Could skip so lightly by.  
Stand off, or else my skipping-rope  
Will hit you in the eye."—  
of Tennyson, or the lines beginning  
"There was a little dirl,  
And she had a little turl!"—

of our own Longfellow. Once in a great while something simpler and sweeter crept in from the folk-song of other peoples, or verses were conceived in the same spirit, like Tennyson's *Cradle Song*,—"What does little birdie say." Those of maturer years were writing what they thought children would enjoy, without reference to the fact itself, always viewing the child-life from without—and the results are not altogether pleasant to look back upon. Although the Children's Renaissance in English Verse undoubtedly springs from Wordsworth, he was seldom at his happiest in dealing with them and was a persistent offender against their modes of thought.

Finally, heir to the ages, Robert Louis Stevenson came to demonstrate to the world afresh that children had a point of view distinctively their own—a point of view which no more deprived them of poetic insight than freshness of impression, clarity of vision, and quaintness of conception usually do. Perceiving that the little folk had in their minds everything which makes for the poetic faculty except the capacity for expression, Stevenson set himself to act as their interpreter, and succeeded well enough to be regarded as their mouthpiece. Fortunately, men and women stood ready to take up the work even before he laid it down, and Mrs. Meynell and Mr. Norman Gale in England, Miss Wilkins and Mr. Clinton Scollard in America, and many more are building up a real tradition and a real school, whereby the elder generation is enabled to read the thoughts of children in terms of themselves.

To this interesting succession Mr. Hamish Hendry adds himself by this book, and he strikes a new note or two. For one thing, he leaves the little girl rather severely alone, only to exhibit an esoteric knowledge of the small boy. A part of this comprehension of boydom shown by Mr. Hendry is manifested in his attempt—the first, it is believed, to be crowned with anything like complete success—to write poetry as a boy would write it, if he knew how.

In "The Plum Pudding Dream," for instance, the boy tells one of the results of Christmas:

"The Dream set sail, with Helm a-lee,  
Till the French fleet hove in sight;  
Ten thousand line-of-battle ships  
On a bowline, cleared for fight.  
'I'll sink the lot,' the Hero cried,  
So he sank the lot all right. . . .

"On Christmas night I dreamed that dream;  
But when the morning came  
Not a single word of it was True,—  
Which was a jolly shame;  
For everything that hero did  
I could have done the same!"

Here is an aspiration which many a healthy boy has longed to have some one put in rhyme for him:

"I wish I lived in Heathen-land,  
Where all my Sunday pennies goes;  
For then I'd climb 'most all the time,  
And never tear no clothes."—

And here is a fact which should be realized:

"I went with Mother to the church  
And never made a single cheep;  
I stared about, and thinked and thinked,—  
Until, of course, I fell asleep."

There is a little pair of verses, too, about getting out of bed on the right or wrong side—one of the solemn observations made by their elders to children; here is the position reversed:

"Some days my Nursie says—'You may';  
Some days she says—'Now, don't';  
Some days she gives me all my way,  
Some days she won't;  
And oh! I find it *such* a bother  
To tell a 'don't day' from another."—

Then there is the tale of the little boy who wished to know where the waves went at low tide. "I asked my Nurse," he reports:

"I asked my Nurse; I asked and asked,  
Till, hot, she cried: 'Oh, drat!  
The Tide's the Tide, do let it bide:'  
Now, was there sense in *that*?"

The book is a real delight, and Miss Woodward's pictures are admirable.

### A VISIBLE MISTAKE

THE INVISIBLE MAN.—By H. G. Wells. Edward Arnold. \$1.25.

THIS is the third semi-scientific romance Mr. Wells has given us, besides an odd score of short stories in an identical vein. Of these only one, and that one the first, *The Time Machine*, has been completely satisfactory in its final appeal to the reader's intelligence and sense of form. It rose above the suspicion of trickery and mere cleverness into literature, and so far as we know, it still remains unique as the happiest blending of science and imagination in the English language. Mr. Wells has paid the natural penalty of success by feeling himself called upon to repeat it. In the bright moments of escape from his reputation he wrote those two delightful books, *The Wonderful Visit* and *The Wheels of Chance*, and in them he realized himself. But normally the shadow of *The Time Machine* has lain across his path, fatal *impasse*; and under its influence Mr. Wells has rung the changes on the wierd and the grotesque, and the horrible and the gruesome, vainly hoping to summon up the inspiration of his first achievement. And the result has always fallen just short of that supreme success. Dexterity of imagination, apt phrases and the power of skillful workmanship have never deserted him; but the last con-



vincing touch has not again been apparent. Nor has Mr. Wells recovered it in *The Invisible Man*. The book is—what are the adjectives?—deft, ingenious, vivid, exciting; sprinkled, too, with the terse impressionism that comes more easily to this writer than to any of our younger men; yet inadequate and unsatisfying. And to succeed only partially in a book of this sort is to fall like Lucifer. The reader's intellect must surrender its last outpost or the book is a mere *tour de force*. The reason consented willingly to *The Time Machine*, but *The Invisible Man* lacks the final art to win more than a limited acquiescence. Partly this is the result of faulty construction; the reader, knowing all along that the man is invisible, and finding himself conscientiously unable to be thrilled and mystified, along with the characters of the story. Nor, when that fact is patent to every one, does the tale, except in its concluding scene, rise much above the level of a lively knock-about farce. The humor is not Mr. Wells's best humor; expressions such as "he staggered in more dead than alive," and "a blow that might have felled an ox," are not suggestive of Mr. Wells at his crispest; and the book as a whole is not up to Mr. Wells's usual level. It is fascinating and distinctive, as is everything he writes; but it is not so good as many of his earlier productions. The best scenes in it are those which give the widest play to Mr. Wells's knowledge of the English middle and working classes, and of English village life. There he is admirable. Who would not sacrifice a dozen books like *The Island of Dr. Moreau* for one like *The Wheels of Chance*? Surely by this time Mr. Wells has paid sufficient tribute to his scientific training. He ought to be able, with an easy conscience, now to lock his laboratory door for good, and return to the study of homely, every-day life. It is in that field only that he will win any lasting success.

#### AWAITING A THIRD

APHRÓESSA, A LEGEND OF ARGOLIS.—By George Horton. 16mo. T. Fisher Unwin. \$1.25.

FROM Mr. Horton's former book of verse, *In Unknown Seas*, to this beautiful poem of narration and description is a long stride forward in everything that attests poetical ability except a display of originality. The subject itself is as old a one as the love of a shepherd for a Nereid, who, by losing her veil to him, makes the accomplishment of his ardent desire possible. Her veil regained, he is left to die of love after the pastoral manner. Laying the scene in a modern Greece casts but the slightest tinge of Christianity over the old nature worship, and can hardly be held to have affected the coloring of the poem at all.

In telling the story in heroics Mr. Horton has caught and held the charm of Keats and the melody of Tennyson to an extent that makes nearly every

verse reminiscent. It is this echo alone that keeps *Aphrōessa* from attaining true distinction; for, as might be supposed, nothing sweeter than the resultant from the poet's mastery of the secrets of the two great harmonists is to be imagined. Let a single extract suffice—the picture of Aphrōessa won:

—"in a breath she dropped

Her mood of angry sorrow and became  
As shyly happy as a half-hour bride  
When love is maddest. Thus she hid her eyes  
The while her body shivered at his touch,  
Or flashed brief glances through him, looks that spoke  
Of shame and joy commingled—joy so great  
No shame could hide it—shame that fiercer grew  
Even with the bliss it blushed for."

In an older writer the practical merging of poetic identity into the genius of another would be cause for reasonable apprehension. In this case it but stimulates the hope that a third volume from the pen of our recent consul to Athens will show a union of the graces of *Aphrōessa* with the strength and vigor of *In Unknown Seas*.

#### LADY NOVELISTS AGAIN

STUART AND BAMBOO.—By Sarah P. McLean Greene. 8vo. Harper & Brothers. \$1.25.

ALLAN RANSFORD.—By Ellen Douglas Deland. 8vo. Harper & Brothers. \$1.50.

JOHN LEIGHTON, JR.—By Katrina Trask. 8vo. Harper & Brothers. \$1.25.

THE lady-novelist, judging from the three specimens of her work lying concrete before us, has now omitted from her litany the petition relative to deliverance from sudden death. Or else an edict has gone forth from the Paris where styles are set in novel-making, decreeing that to be of the great world one must henceforth wear her hands duly incarnadined.

Mrs. Greene has a brightly impossible lad in her book who gets quite beyond her control. Unable to dispose of him in any other way, she leads him needlessly into the flames and heartlessly incinerates him. Mrs. Deland conceives it necessary to inject an element of pathos into her book—this occurs to us rather as an excuse than a reason—so she kills off the most useful character she had—and goes on to demonstrate that all the survivors were quite as well off as before. Miss Trask, having opened her volume with a death, deems it obligatory to end it as a tragedy, and, after making it absolutely unnecessary to destroy anybody by honorably adjusting all the possible difficulties of all her people, slays her heroine and rings for a quick curtain.

It is not intended by thus dwelling upon the single point which these three books have in common to intimate that they contain no other faults, or even that heedless murders or manslaughters are the most



grievous of them. Mrs. Greene's book, for example, is as impossible as it is unnecessary. In Mrs. Deland's novel the characters do nothing but involve themselves in troubles from which they are certain to be pleasantly extricated. Miss Trask's book is a little more pretentious, since her hero is the Honorable Peter Stirling, with the details and consistencies of the character omitted. She begins by attacking the *Westminster Catechism*, and ends with an implied assault upon the marriage relation, which, like almost everything else in the story, if it prove anything proves exactly the contrary of all for which she is contending.

The fundamental trouble with all these books was the trouble at their inception: their authors mistake impulsion for compulsion.

### THE PRICE OF PROMISE

LITERARY LOVE-LETTERS AND OTHER STORIES.—By Robert Herrick. 18mo. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$0.75.

IT is now three years since Mr. Robert Herrick's *Literary Love-Letters* appeared in the *Atlantic*, and the readers of that periodical were astonished and delighted that anything so delicately morbid should come out of Chicago. During that time a small, but appreciative, audience, has followed his career with interest. Subtleties, devious psychology, and advanced, but not sensational, thinking, are not things which make for popularity. Mr. Herrick is a serious worker, and he obtains serious, though not widespread, attention. *The Man Who Wins*, the novel which he published, was good, and it was Mr. Herrick's best, so far. The present volume should undoubtedly have come first. It does not, it is true, entirely represent work actually done before the publication of *The Man Who Wins*, but it represents the mood and the method of Mr. Herrick's first appearance, and in our opinion he has gained since then.

The last three stories in the new volume are not especially good, nor should we judge them to have been done *con amore*. For purposes of criticism they may be omitted. This leaves four stories, which are variations on the theme which filled *Literary Love-Letters*. Mr. Herrick's *jeune premier* is an interesting, but not entirely pleasant, figure. He is weak physically, in love with passion, but passionless, acutely sensitive to beauty, an artistic idler, a futile dilettante, selfish in a hard, and yet rather effeminate way. In contrast to him is a woman, robustly physically, and more masterful. Slightly modified from these types the two appear in each of the four stories. Admirably written, so far as mere sentences and paragraphs go, we cannot but feel that the first three stories lack the vigor, concision, and directness of Mr. Herrick's novel, that they are over-refined to the point of cloying and delicate to the point of being even sickly. In *Mare Mortu*

Mr. Herrick even has his only half-confident try at symbolism, and achieves some of the easier faults of that school of art.

In the glamour of a *début*, one saw few of the faults now visible and saw only the promise of thoughtful work. The promise is fulfilled in the fourth story, *The Price of Romance*, which, indeed, makes reading the book quite worth while. The theme is one that De Maupassant would have loved, tragic comedy, which he would have treated—perhaps very much as Mr. Herrick did. "The Price of Romance" was, first, poverty in married life, followed by luxury, resulting from the secret destruction by the wife of a will of a dying uncle which was unfavourable to her. Then comes the wife's remorse at her own deed: her scorn of her husband, that even when the chance for artistic achievement comes, he is content with trifling and being coddled; her horror at her final discovery that he had all along known her crime and had acquiesced in it and been content to enjoy the gains—all this is unpleasant, if you will, but careful, vigorous, restrained, a real triumph of story telling. But it takes more than one story to make a volume.

### THE OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK

OUTLINES IN LOCAL COLOR.—By Brander Matthews. 12mo. Illustrated. Harper & Bros. \$1.50.

IT is unfortunate that Mr. Brander Matthews could not construct his *Outlines in Local Color*, as did Solomon his temple, without the sound of hammer or of axe. Unfortunate that is, if Mr. Matthews's writing is to be considered as fiction. There is, it is true, in each piece of writing in the present volume the shadow of a story, the ghost of a situation. But it is buried deep in a tremendous mass of description and comment. The comment and description are terse, nervous, deft, altogether admirable, and the reader is forced to conclude that Mr. Matthews writes fiction to show how well he can write something else, how good a craftsman he is. The workshop seems open to view, and the author may be seen there vigorously hammering and beating his stories into shape. A not uncommon conclusion has been that Mr. Matthews cannot write fiction—a hundred smart critics have told us so. Of this we do not feel at all certain. At one or two places in this book, especially in *A Letter of Farewell* we have felt that Mr. Matthews might move us if he only would. The constant impression is that he has the well bred man's distrust of anything "emotional," and that he would be rather embarrassed if he should expose his stories in their bare human interest.

In spite of all this, he has his own merit and value. He describes the outside of New York's show as it is, the afternoon tea, the Horse Show, the shopping excursion, and, as well, Union Square

by night, with its sleeping, homeless vagabonds; the saloon of a local politician, with its pitiable hangers-on; the kitchen of an aristocrat during a dinner party. His book will always be a valuable document; it is a bold bid for the position of historian of our own times. The descriptions are always directly, simply, and effectively done; the dialogue is often smart; the whole is very good reading. While it is done with minute care it is so free from bombast and affectation that it should be an invaluable model for college students and reporters. But it is not fiction.

### MILL WORK

SALTED BY FIRE.—By George Macdonald. 12mo. Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.50.

**W**HEN the souter—or cougar—or whatever he may be—looks up from his shoe-soling and says “Hoots, mon” or “Ay, Ay, my dowie,” one knows about what to expect. There comes to mind the prayer of that old darkey who addressed the deity as to him seemed fitting: “O, all-sufficient, self-sufficient, and insufficient being.”

Dr. Macdonald has followed the well-known recipe for its kind only too carefully. The young minister, half prig and wholly cad; the supernaturally silly victim of his green affections; the other girl, supernaturally angelic, who rectifies his life and bestows him in an apotheosis of smiles and tears and prayers upon the infant which was his living image—all the items are here. To do the young man justice, “he gasped with astonishment, almost consternation.” After which the fall of a highly respectable curtain upon this triumph of the unco guid, leaving behind a strong flavor of the kailyard and a memory of eternal preachments.

Had this been all, the book might be dismissed to its own place among the theologically mawkish, and whatever the chemical process of salting by fire might be, the fire be recognized as that used for the boiling of pots. The book, however, has pretensions of a more serious kind. It is supposed to present a reasonable, even a religious, picture of the mind and heart of the man; his struggles with his evil Scottish presbyterian nature, and his final emergence into something a shade brighter than the usual gray.

To do this—to dare this—a writer must have either a philosophy by which he can construct his scheme of things entire, or an observation of comprehensive external phenomena. Dr. Macdonald needs at least the qualifications of an undergraduate course in psychology and English. Simple heart-to-heart talks are not enough. In this case Dr. Macdonald's clientele—unfortunately rather large—might have escaped the weird experience of the minister when his “knees having found their way to the carpet,” the “keen, bare truth broke upon him like a huge, cold wave,” and “the vision was

conscious of itself as his.” Nor would their hearts be wrung because “more than twice he all but turned to go, but it was as usual, only ‘all but,’ and he kept waiting on.” Truly the way of this transgressor was hard.

Once, long ago possibly, Dr. Macdonald wrote a fairly good book. This, his latest, may be said to be more than fairly bad. It is a wholly inadequate and pretentious attempt at a problem too large for him. He cannot be said to have made any proper use of his years of country practice. His powders and potions are those of an unscientific yesterday.

### TALES FROM McCLURE'S

TALES FROM McCLURE'S:—HUMOR, ROMANCE.—18mo. New York. Doubleday & McClure Co.

**O**UR interest in the stories contained in these two volumes has, we confess frankly, been overshadowed by our curiosity as to what theory guided the Messrs. Doubleday and McClure in separating them into two classes, succinctly described as *Humor* and *Romance*. By everyday standards, the most humorous tales are included in the volume labelled *Romance*, while its companion, *Humor*, contains the most romantic story of the lot. By tabulating the results of our examination, however, we observe that all the stories in *Romance* contain what is technically known to newspaper critics as a love interest, while of the seven found in *Humor* only two deal with this emotion. A humorous story, then, we are prepared to define as one rarely dealing with love. And this definition is, probably, on the whole, the only one to which the volume in question completely answers.

The volumes have the added interest and importance of being the results of Mr. McClure's search for rising native talent. Robert Barr, Louise Chandler Moulton, Octave Thanet, and William Allen White are names of well known writers. But the remaining ten authors are merely of varying obscurity.

The rumor has gone abroad that *McClure's Magazine* had a strong belief in young American writers and an eager desire to give them a hearing. These little books, therefore, bring to the reader a double disappointment in every story which he judges a failure. They serve to emphasize what we have repeatedly claimed. In other countries young men may over-refine and over-elaborate, they may lose the spirit in the letter, and they may suffer from the dry-rot of decadence. In this country the beginner is usually making no attempt for style, no study of technique; he is trusting entirely to what he has to say, and caring not at all how he says it, and if he is perfectly healthy he is also often crassly stupid. The competition of publishers has lowered editorial standards, and the budding genius is caught up into



the heaven of McClure's or some rival magazine before heart, mind, or hand has attained its development.

Mr. McClure in this case has made things look worse than they really are. His *penchant* for misleading labels leads him to call the books *Tales from McClure's*, which an ingenuous public will take to mean from *McClure's Magazine*. But in two or more instances the stories have been rescued from the oblivion of newspaper columns where they first appeared. We doubt very much whether Mrs. Moulton and Mrs. E. V. Wilson will take kindly this unearthing of stories happily forgotten.

Of the two "exhibits," *Humor* is the worse, and *Romance*, because it tries for more, the more discouraging. In the former, Octave Thanet is amusing enough, though we have a deep-rooted objection to so good a writer's wandering in Mr. Frank Stockton's domain. *The King of Boyville*, by Mr. White, we have already praised in very high terms. But from it the volume sinks into a dull level of slovenly and uninspiring writing. The stories might all have come from one hand, so unindividual is the style; or from one newspaper, so cheap is the fun. The sense of form is under-developed, as low even as the variety of shapelessness known as "the sketch." An extract from Mr. Temple's appropriately named *Romance of Dulltown* will show the criminal folly of an editor who can permit such stuff to be printed.

"Times flies," remarks Mr. Temple, and continuing: "Gentle reader, this is not an original remark. In fact its authorship is lost in the mists of antiquity, though there has not been an age in which the essential fact it records has not been repeated in varied shape, all either reasserting or moralizing upon the fugacious character of time."

In *Romance* Mr. Barr is cheap, and Mrs. Moulton frankly wishy-washy. Miss Anna Robeson Brown is pleasantly humorous. Anne Devoore, and Gertrude Smith, were picked green, and this unfortunate process is still more forcibly shown in the case of Mrs. E. V. Wilson. She has some force, and her feeling is real and genuine. It would be effective if she had not been allowed to be so cruelly careless.

#### HOW TO CATCH COD

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS.—By Rudyard Kipling. Illustrated. 12mo. Century Co. \$1.50.

THE newspapers are good enough, from time to time, to give us news about the doings of the authors. We are, for instance, informed that Mr. Rider Haggard went to Mexico to get the atmosphere for one of his books. Dr. Conan Doyle was in Egypt for some time on a similar errand. Mr. Augustus Thomas lived "in Missouri" until he knew the land. And so on. Curiously enough we seldom

hear that Mr. Rudyard Kipling is anywhere—securing material. And more marvellous still—each of his books shows a preparatory knowledge that seems almost beyond possibility. We are so accustomed to call a man versatile because he can write novels and essays, and build lighthouses into the bargain, that we have no word to express the parts of one who seems to have done everything and been everywhere. In his latest book, *Captains Courageous*, Mr. Kipling writes:

"Troop says the most interesting thing in the world is to find out how the next man gets his vittles."

Quite the most interesting thing about *Captains Courageous* would be to find out how its author got his material. Of course, there are persons—and it is alleged that the whole town of Gloucester took up arms over the book—there are persons who deny that Mr. Kipling has written truth. There were those who found his "oo7" foolish, because he had referred to green and red bumpers on a locomotive. But the fact remains that Mr. Kipling slips up only because he tries to be thorough, while other writers are content to fail in their superficialities. Surely no story-teller of his time has known so much about so many things, and made it all interesting. Mr. Kipling should write text-books: he should be engaged by the United Boards of Education of all towns to write of dull things in such a way as to entrance his readers. Under his guidance learning would become a pastime and delight, while half-education would cease to be the characteristic of America.

*Captains Courageous* is hardly a story; it is really a patchwork of two articles by Mr. Kipling—one on the fishery business of Gloucester, and the other on an American millionaire. What there is of story is wholly incidental and of miraculous unimportance. A fresh and impudent boy—son of a much occupied millionaire and an adoring and foolish mother—is, in a seasick faint, dropped from the deck of an ocean steamer as it is passing the Banks. He is picked up by a fisherman in a dory and carried to the schooner *We're Here* of Gloucester. The owner is not greatly overcome by the honor of the rescue and listens badly to the promises of unlimited reward if he will steer straight for land and miss the fishing season. He merely thinks the boy is crazy, and to bring him to he pounds him in the face until he is reasonable. Thereafter the boy—having had just what was needed—became a proper laboring member of the crew.

The rest of the book is practically given over to a description, minute and somewhat lengthy, of fishing life along the Banks. Written by any one else, it would have no attraction for the general reader. Done by Kipling, it is saved from interminable tediousness only by the wonder of its being. It is so constantly a surprise—the information and detail—that one reads on, although the matter in itself



is not vastly dramatic or interesting. In the end the *We're Here* comes home with its load of cod and the boy—no longer spoiled and even become somewhat of a man—telegraphs his father in the Far West. Then Mr. Kipling, for contrast's sake, describes the flying trip of the railroad millionaire from San Diego to Boston. It is beautifully done and wisely. There is always a confidence about it, and Mr. Kipling's confidence in his own stories does much to convince his readers.

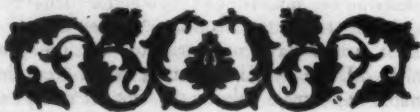
After all, Kipling is a man of marvelously broad sympathies.

*Captains Courageous* is more wonderful than good. It is a machine which amazes you by its existence and interests you by the everlasting surprise of its author's information. The story is certainly not unusually good; the characters, aside from their occupations, are in no sense particularly well drawn. The book is mostly without humor, and the style has no charm. It might be one of the series of Great Enterprises now appearing in the magazines, but why it should be a story one questions.

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